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Music as a Mirror of History

Course Guidebook

Professor Robert Greenberg
San Francisco Performances



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Dr. Robert Greenberg was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1954 and has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area since 1978. He received a B.A. in Music, magna cum laude, from Princeton University in 1976. His principal teachers

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Dr. Greenberg has composed more than 50 works for a wide variety of instrumental and vocal ensembles. Recent performances of his works have taken place in New York; San Francisco; Chicago; Los Angeles; England; Ireland; Greece; Italy; and the Netherlands, where his *Child's Play* for String Quartet was performed at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.

Dr. Greenberg has received numerous honors, including three Nicola de Lorenzo Composition Prizes and three Meet The Composer grants. He has received commissions from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress, the Alexander String Quartet, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the Strata Ensemble, San Francisco Performances, and the XTET ensemble. Dr. Greenberg is a board member and an artistic director of COMPOSERS, INC., a composers' collective and production organization based in San Francisco. His music is published

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Dr. Greenberg has performed, taught, and lectured extensively across North America and Europe. He is currently Music Historian-in-Residence with San Francisco Performances, where he has lectured and performed since 1994. He has served on the faculties of the University of California, Berkeley; California State University, East Bay; the Advanced Management Program at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business; and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he chaired the Department of Music History and Literature from 1989 to 2001 and served as the director of the Adult Extension Division from 1991 to 1996.

Dr. Greenberg has lectured for some of the most prestigious musical and arts organizations in the United States, including the San Francisco Symphony (where for 10 years he was host and lecturer for the symphony's nationally acclaimed Discovery Series), the Chautauqua Institution (where he was the Everett Scholar-in-Residence during the 2006 season), the Ravinia Festival, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Van Cliburn Foundation, the Nasher Sculpture Center, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Villa Montalvo, Music@Menlo, and the University of British Columbia (where he was the Dal Grauer Lecturer in September 2006).

In addition, Dr. Greenberg is a sought-after lecturer for businesses and business schools and has spoken for such diverse organizations as S. C. Johnson, Canadian Pacific, Deutsche Bank, the University of California/Haas School of Business Executive Seminar, the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, Harvard Business School Publishing, Kaiser Permanente, the Strategos Institute, Quintiles Transnational, the Young Presidents' Organization, the World Presidents' Organization, and the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco. Dr. Greenberg has been profiled in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Inc.* magazine, the *Times* of London, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *San Jose Mercury News*, the University of California alumni magazine, *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, and *Diablo* magazine.

For 15 years, Dr. Greenberg was the resident composer and music historian for NPR's *Weekend All Things Considered* and *Weekend Edition, Sunday* with Liane Hansen. In February 2003, Maine's *Bangor Daily News* referred to Dr. Greenberg as the Elvis of music history and appreciation, an appraisal that has given him more pleasure than any other.

Dr. Greenberg's other Great Courses include *The 30 Greatest Orchestral Works*; *How to Listen to and Understand Great Music, 3rd Edition*; *Concert Masterworks*; *Bach and the High Baroque*; *The Symphonies of Beethoven*; *How to Listen to and Understand Opera*; the *Great Masters* series; *The Operas of Mozart*; *The Life and Operas of Verdi*; *The Symphony*; *The Chamber Music of Mozart*; *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*; *The Concerto*; *Understanding the Fundamentals of Music*; *The Music of Richard Wagner*; and *The 23 Greatest Solo Piano Works*. ■

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Music as a Mirror of History

Scope:

In *Self-Reliance and Other Essays*, the always quotable Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: “The true poem is the poet’s mind; the true ship is the ship-builder. In the man we should see the reason for the last flourish and tendril of his work.” To this, we might add: The true musical composition is the composer. The creator and his or her creation are not divisible. A creation, whatever it might be, is to some unique degree, a reflection of its creator, who in turn is shaped by the time and place in which he or she lives. The individual composer, an individual composition, a particular time and place: Together, they constitute a symbiotic, indivisible trifecta.

At the most general level, a composer’s environment shapes his musical style, meaning the generalized musical vocabulary and expressive parameters of his work. But sometimes, specific historical events shape the creation and content of a piece of music, and that’s what this survey is about: music written in direct response to contemporary historical events. As such, this will be a course about connections: the connections between composers and historical events—events that shaped the composers’ lives and inspired the creation of the works under study.

For example, in one lecture, we will focus on the events surrounding the composition of a piano sonata entitled *From the Street 1.X.1905* (“the first of October 1905”) by Leoš Janáček. Janáček was born and lived in Moravia, which is today the eastern region of the Czech Republic. He was a rabid Czech/Moravian nationalist, and his nationalism was intensified by occupation: At the time he grew up, all Czech lands, including Moravia, were controlled by a German-speaking ruling class.

Janáček’s sonata was composed in response to an anti-German protest in Brno, the capital of Moravia. During the protest, German troops attacked

the unarmed protesters and killed a 20-year-old Moravian carpenter. In order to provide historical context for the protest that inspired Janáček's sonata, our discussion will range all over the temporal map. It will start with the German dismantling of Czechoslovakia in 1938 and 1939, the brutality suffered by the Czechs during the Second World War, and the revenge exacted on the German-speaking Czech minority after the war. The lecture will then range backward to 1918 and 1919 to observe the creation of the sovereign state of Czechoslovakia from what had been the Austrian Empire. We'll then go even further back, to the forcible "Germanization" of Czech lands in the 1620s and 1630s. Finally, we will move on to the Czech national revival of the 19th century, which so powerfully affected Janáček and his music.

We'll take the same approach as we study the works of numerous other composers, including Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Berlioz, Chopin, Verdi, Wagner, and many others. Instead of dissecting how classical masterpieces work as music per se, we'll explore the ways in which history inspired the creation of certain musical works—and how those works interpreted and memorialized the history that inspired them. In this course, current events, culture, and art collide to provide a fascinating interdisciplinary look at a unique musical canon.

Music and History, Madrigals and Maps

Any artistic creation—a poem, a painting, or a symphony—is a reflection of its creator, who in turn is shaped by the environment in which he or she lives. Of course, this environment includes contemporary historical events, which may influence or inspire the creation of art. In this course, we'll specifically explore music written in response to historical events and the connections between composers and the events they experienced. In this lecture, we'll begin with a madrigal written by Thomas Morley, "Hard by a Crystal Fountain." Written during the waning days of Queen Elizabeth's rule, the work conjures up an idealized world, one presented brilliantly and jubilantly. It is music of its time, describing a national self-perception.

Queen Elizabeth I—Oriana

- To begin to see how a piece of music can encapsulate current events and capture the spirit of its time, let's explore the life of Queen Elizabeth I, the fifth and last of the Tudor monarchs. Elizabeth was born on September 7, 1533, the daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. She was crowned queen in November 1558 at the age of 25, and she remained queen until her death on March 24, 1603, nearly 45 years later.
- Over the long run, Elizabeth's reign brought about a degree of domestic stability not experienced since the early years of her father's reign. She oversaw the creation of the Church of England and the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. She raised England's prestige on the continent and was the most popular English monarch before Victoria, who was to reign about 250 years later.

- As Elizabeth aged, the myths about her coalesced. She was identified as the goddess Diana, the chaste huntress who was the guardian of the night. Elizabeth was also referred to as Cynthia, a nickname for the Greek goddess of the moon, Artemis. In addition, she was known as Oriana, meaning “golden one” in Italian and “sunrise” and “dawn” in Latin.



Morley's "Hard by a Crystal Fountain" is music of its time, music that describes a national self-perception in the waning days of the reign of Elizabeth I.

- In 1597, one of Elizabeth's courtiers, Nicholas Yonge, published an anthology of small choral works called *madrigals*. The last madrigal in the set—by a composer named Giovanni Croce—was entitled “Where between the Grass and the Flowers.” This particular madrigal was chosen to round off the set because it concluded with a salute to Queen Elizabeth: “Then sang the shepherds and nymphs of Diana: / Long live fair Oriana!”
- That closing line was spotted by the well-known English composer and singer Thomas Morley. The queen had granted Morley a music publishing monopoly in 1598, and Morley, out of gratitude, decided to honor her by publishing a collection of 26 madrigals by 23 different composers, each of which would end with the same words as Croce's madrigal.
- Two of the madrigals are by Morley himself, including “Hard by a Crystal Fountain.” Like all of the madrigals in the set, this one evokes a rapturous, verdant paradise presented as a metaphor for the heaven on earth that Queen Elizabeth had presumably created for her subjects.
- We should note that London in the late 16th century was not a particularly heavenly place but, rather, a filthy city where more people died than were born. The madrigal, however, conjures up an idealized world, one presented brilliantly and jubilantly. It is not about urban truth but public perception, and after more than four decades of rule, the national self-perception was that Elizabeth had made England heaven on earth.
- It is said that “History is perceived memory,” which is perhaps another way of saying, “Let's not let the facts get in the way of a good story.” Having said that, a culture's self-perception, its national myth—factually inaccurate though it may—is nevertheless as legitimate a part of a nation's historical narrative as facts and figures. We will encounter other such national myth-defining music throughout this course.

Stories behind Maps

- No matter how much we depend on maps, we must understand there is something random, even false about certain maps. In fact, our road maps, political maps, GPS readouts, and globes of the world—crisscrossed by borders indicating countries, states, provinces, and counties—are man-made, artificial constructs.
- If the continents are construed as the product of plate tectonics, then our maps as construed are a product of human tectonics. And just as the continents drift, so, too, do the boundary lines on political maps. Unless they are defined by topographic features, such as rivers, mountains, or oceans, the boundary lines on maps often represent nothing more than geopolitical compromises that do not necessarily reflect the reality on the ground.
- For example, if we look at a map of the Balkan Peninsula in 1900, we see the nation of Serbia straddling the crossroads between central and southern Europe. After centuries of exploitation and occupation by the Ottoman Turks, the emerging countries of the Balkan Peninsula—with Serbia in the lead—were in the process of freeing themselves from the Ottoman Turks.
 - With the successful conclusion of the Second Balkan War in 1913, Serbia almost doubled its territory and increased its population by some 50 percent. But for the statesmen and secret policemen who ran Serbia, this was not enough. They had come to the conclusion that it was Serbia's destiny to create a Greater Serbia by uniting all the Serbian territories.
 - The Serbian position was one of *irredentism*: a position that advocates annexing territories belonging to other states on the pretext of common ethnicity or prior historical possession, real or legendary.
 - Serbian irredentism created the crisis that triggered World War I, which in turn triggered the Russian Revolution, the creation of Soviet communism and international communism, the rise of Italian and German fascism, World War II, and the Cold War. And as soon as the Soviet Union, the Eastern bloc, and the country of Yugoslavia disintegrated in the 1990s, the newly reestablished Balkan nation of

Serbia was back at it, the lessons that led to the catastrophe of World War I still unlearned.

Poland

- Another example of the impermanence of maps is Poland. Today, it is an independent nation-state in central Europe with a population of some 38.5 million people. Modern Poland has a total area of 120,726 square miles, making it the ninth largest country in Europe. On a map, we can see the neat, clean lines defining Poland's completely indefensible borders.
- In fact, Poland's borders have changed so often over the last 450 years that the Polish "nation" is as much a state of mind as it is a physical place. The Kingdom of Poland was founded in 1569, but it was eaten alive by its voracious neighbors: the Russian Empire to the east, Prussia to the west, and Austria to the south. Poland was "partitioned," first in 1772, then again in 1793 and 1795.
- Napoleonic victories against Prussia led to the creation in 1807 of a small puppet state called the Duchy of Warsaw, which itself was broken up in 1815 when Napoleon was defeated. Another new Polish state was created, this one called Congress Poland (because it was created during the international summit called the Congress of Vienna). Congress Poland was, in fact, a puppet state of the Russian Empire and was slowly absorbed into the empire until it ceased to exist in 1867.
- Though the tiny Polish Army had no chance against its Russian counterpart, a major uprising broke out in Warsaw in November of 1830 and was not put down until September 8, 1831, when Warsaw was taken by Russia. A 21-year-old Warsaw native—a pianist and composer named Frédéric Chopin—was in Stuttgart on his way to Paris when he heard the news. He was inspired to write a piece of music about this historical event. That piece of music—now known as the Revolutionary Étude in C Minor, op. 10, no. 12—captures his rage and defiance.



- After nearly 150 years of partition and occupation, Poland reemerged as an independent nation in 1918, only to be invaded and partitioned once again in 1939 by Germany and the Soviet Union. At the conclusion of World War II, the Soviet Union annexed virtually all of eastern Poland; that Polish territory is, today, part of the nations of Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. In return for the lands seized by the Soviets in 1945, Poland was awarded a roughly equal size swath of territory on its western border. And that's where the map of Poland remains today.
- We must remain aware that maps can obscure as much they reveal. Patterns of settlement and tribal distributions of population do not

usually jibe with the maps drawn by colonial powers or modern nation-states. Many if not most of the historical events we will study in this course will be the result of population movement, border conflict, and changing maps.

Art and History

- What inspires an artist? We might answer beauty, love, or faith. But these are not in themselves historical events. Thus, to a large degree, the historical events we will encounter in this course will be about changing maps—about conflict.
- Conflicts—revolutions, riots, protests—create relatively sudden, disruptive change. At its most extreme, *conflict* means war, the most terrible folly in which our species can indulge.
 - Wars are both the simplest and the most complex of human endeavors. They are simple because they manifest naked aggression on one hand and self-defense on the other, instincts coded into our DNA through billions of years of evolution as a result of our never-ending competition for resources and optimum living environments.
 - War is also the most massive and complex of all human activities, pitting the human, material, and technological wealth of entire nations against each other in scenarios so complicated and devastating as to render any other activity insignificant by comparison.
- For better or worse, the magnified emotions stirred by conflict are like mother's milk for artists, authors, and composers, whose creations feed off the energy in their environments.
- The war poetry of Wilfred Owen, Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, Henryk Górecki's Symphony no. 3—these are but a few examples of great art rooted in the most terrible of human experiences, great art that transcends and informs and finds meaning in the terrible events that inspired it. The fact that we will find artistic beauty in the chaos of conflict should offer great solace for the darker historical events this course will cover.

Hard Choices

- Hard choices had to be made when deciding what music and, therefore, which historical events were to be included in this survey. Having said that, there are two famous pieces of music whose absence from this survey we should address at the outset.
- The single most famous concert work that was explicitly inspired by a historical event is Peter Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* of 1880. However, Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* was composed 68 years after the events it describes. It is not an artistic reaction to current events but, rather, an exercise in nostalgia, a "grand commemorative festival piece" composed for use at celebrations.
- The other seemingly most topical piece excluded from this course is *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* for 52 strings, composed in 1960 by the Polish-born composer Krzysztof Penderecki. It's a dark, powerful, brutal work in which Penderecki uses all sorts of extended instrumental techniques to create a series of extraordinarily violent, shrieking, siren-like, and explosive masses of sound.
 - Penderecki's *Threnody* would seem to be as sincere an antiwar statement as any ever created; it has been compared to Picasso's painting *Guernica* of 1937 and Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* of 1962. But in fact, the *Threnody* wasn't conceived as an antiwar statement or memorial at all. Its original title was *8'37"*.
 - According to Penderecki, he decided to dedicate the piece to the victims of Hiroshima only after he heard it performed and was made viscerally aware of its devastating expressive punch. That explanation, however, is not entirely true.
 - It seems that the Polish communist authorities were unhappy with the abstract title *8'37"* and only when someone suggested calling the piece by the programmatic title *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima*—with its implied criticism of the West for using the bomb—did the piece find official favor.

Handel: *Water Music* (1714)

The life and career of George Frideric Handel—a German-born composer of Italian-language opera who went on to become England’s greatest composer—is an extraordinary mirror of the cosmopolitan nature and dynastic politics of 18th-century Europe. This is the story of two Germans named George, one of whom became England’s greatest musical son and the other, the king of England himself!

The Legend

- George Frideric Handel was born in the city of Halle in the central German state of Saxony-Anhalt on February 23, 1685. Despite his prodigious musical gifts and his burning ambition to be a composer, Handel’s father insisted his son go to law school, which George did in 1702, at the age of 17. Within a year, Handel abandoned the law for a career as a composer.
- Handel’s first two operas—*Almira* and *Nero*—were written and produced in Hamburg in 1705, when he was just 20 years of age. From 1706 to 1710, he lived and worked in Italy, composing operas and sacred music.
- By 1710, the 25-year-old Handel had become a hot compositional commodity, and in June of that year, he was hired as Kapellmeister (“music director”) at the court of Prince Georg Ludwig, the elector of Hanover, in central-north Germany.
- Two years later, in the autumn of 1712, Handel received permission from Prince Georg to visit London “on condition that he return within

a reasonable time.” But Handel remained in London for two years, and Prince Georg was not pleased.

- On August 1, 1714, Queen Anne of England died and was succeeded by Prince Georg Ludwig, who was crowned King George I on October 20, 1714.
- According to legend, the truant Handel plotted with his friend Baron Kielmansegge to obtain the king’s pardon. When the king and his court took an excursion by barge on the Thames, Kielmansegge chartered a second barge manned by musicians under Handel’s command. The music they played—a collection of dances now known as *Water Music*—so captivated George I that he pardoned Handel on the spot and restored him to favor.
- However, this legend of the *Water Music* is not entirely true. By the time the *Water Music* was performed that day on the Thames, King George had been in England for nearly three years. In that time, he had heard numerous performances of Handel’s music. By 1717, the king had reinstated Handel’s Hanover salary, which had been cut off in 1713.
- The real story here is not when Handel was “forgiven” but, rather, how these two Germans—Georg Ludwig and George Handel—became two of the most important Englishmen who ever lived. Handel remains the most famous and beloved “English” composer in history, while Georg Ludwig, as King George I, founded a royal dynasty that lives on today in the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

Dynastic Issues

- Just how did Georg Ludwig, prince of the duchy and electorate of Brunswick-Lüneburg (also known as Hanover) become the king of England?
- Henry VIII became king in 1509 at the age of 17 and reigned for 37 years, until his death at age 55 on January 28, 1547. Henry was

survived by three legitimate children: Mary, the Catholic daughter of his first wife; Elizabeth, the Protestant daughter of his second wife; and Edward, the Protestant son of his third wife.

- When Henry died, the 9-year-old Edward was crowned king. During his brief reign, Protestantism became the religious law of the land. But 13 days after his death at the age of 15, his eldest sister—the Catholic Mary—seized the crown. She attempted to restore Catholicism in England but died five years into her reign, leaving undone her great work of Catholic restoration. Her 25-year-old half-sister, Elizabeth, was crowned queen in 1558.
- Elizabeth I ruled for nearly 45 years, until her death in 1603. There were various challenges to her during her reign, none more serious than a confrontation with another Catholic queen named Mary: Mary I of Scotland, or Mary, Queen of Scots.
- This Mary also laid claim to the English throne as the only surviving legitimate child of King James V of Scotland. Mary was a devout Catholic and was perceived by many English Catholics to be the rightful queen of England. When domestic problems in Scotland forced Mary to abdicate and flee, she sought protection from Elizabeth I. In this, Mary chose poorly. Rightly perceiving Mary as a threat, Queen Elizabeth kept her under house arrest for more than 18 years before decapitating her.
- Before her death, however, Mary birthed a son by her second husband. The child was a boy named James, born in 1566. When Mary was forced to flee Scotland just one year later, James was declared King James VI of Scotland.
- The year 1603 was a signal one in British history. Queen Elizabeth I died on March 24 without ever having produced an heir. Her closest living relative was the now 37-year-old King James VI of Scotland. He was crowned James I of England and Ireland, uniting the sovereign states of England and Scotland and paving the way—eventually—for

the Act of Union in 1707, which created the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

- James was succeeded by his son, Charles I, in 1625. But Charles was executed for high treason in 1649. A chastened monarchy was restored in 1660, when Charles I's son, Charles II, became king of England, Ireland, and Scotland.
- Charles II was succeeded by his brother James in 1688. But James was a pro-French closet Catholic enamored of the same sort of absolutism that had cost Charles I his head. Calls went out to Willem III—the Protestant prince of Orange of the Dutch Republic—to intervene, and Willem complied. King James II absconded to France, and Willem of Orange became King William III of England and Ireland and William II of Scotland.
- Unfortunately, William and his wife, Mary, produced no heir. Thus, he was succeeded by his cousin and sister-in-law, Anne, who also failed to produce a surviving heir. At this point, the English Parliament stepped in.
- By 1701, the Protestants who governed England had had their fill of Catholic successors. Thus, in 1701, Parliament passed the Act of Settlement, which was designed to guarantee Protestant succession by disqualifying Roman Catholics from occupying the English throne. Parliament designated the Protestant Sophia of Hanover—the granddaughter of James I—as heiress presumptive of the British crown: the next queen of England.
- But Sophia never got to be queen. She died at the age of 83, just 53 days before Queen Anne. Instead, her eldest son, Georg Ludwig, ascended the English throne, becoming the first English king of the house of Hanover at the age of 54.



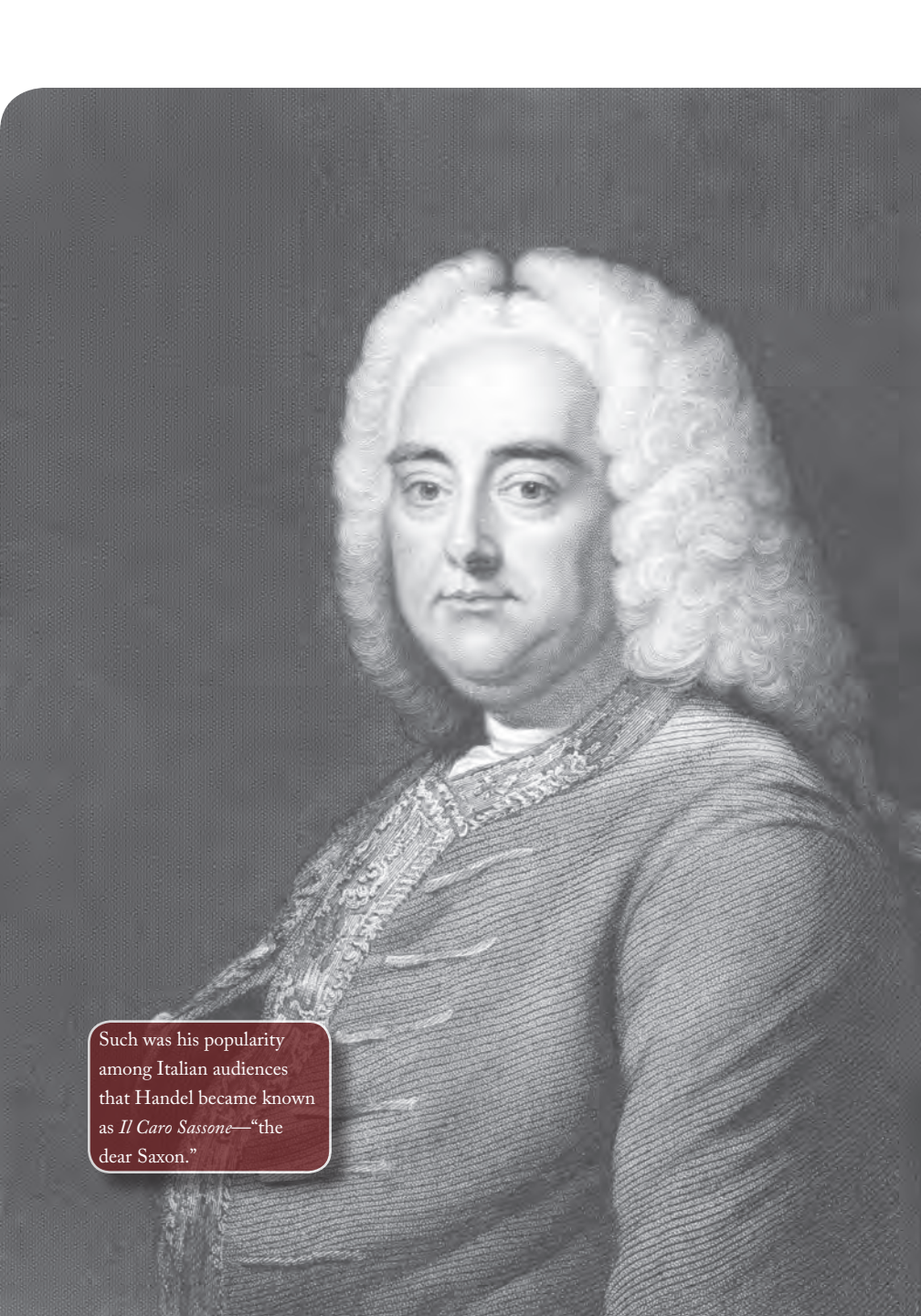
As Queen Anne's closest living Protestant relative, Georg Ludwig became King George I of England, despite the fact that more than 50 Roman Catholics were more closely related by blood to the queen than he was.

Royal Musicians

- Almost all these royals employed musicians as part of their households, who provided suitably royal and martial music at public and private gatherings. Lesser nobles across Europe also employed musicians, particularly during the 17th and 18th centuries, when house orchestras were considered to be the ultimate in sophistication. Among such lesser nobles were the German princes tasked with periodically “electing” the Holy Roman Emperor.
- As of 1701, there were eight such electors, including the elector of Hanover, Georg Ludwig. In 1701, his mother, Sophia, had been designated by the Act of Settlement to be heir to the English throne, which meant that sooner or later, Georg Ludwig would be king of England.
- The electoral court at Hanover was quite sophisticated. In 1688, Georg Ludwig’s father, the elector Ernst Augustus, built a 1,300-seat opera house in Hanover that was considered to be the most beautiful and technologically advanced opera house in all of Germany. Ernst died in 1698, but it was for his opera house that Georg Ludwig hired Handel.
- Handel was appointed Kapellmeister to the electoral court in Hanover on June 16, 1710. The good folks in Hanover were thrilled to have him, but they didn’t get to keep him for long. Handel left Hanover for a leave of absence just a few weeks after signing his contract. He returned briefly in 1711, only to request another leave of absence. It was grudgingly granted, though this time, Handel was informed that he was expected to return “within a reasonable time.” Handel never set foot in Hanover again.

Handel in London

- Handel first arrived in London in either November or December of 1710, at a time when Italian opera was gaining popularity. Almost immediately upon his arrival, melodies from Handel’s opera *Agrippina* were outfitted with new words and inserted into other operas then being performed in



Such was his popularity among Italian audiences that Handel became known as *Il Caro Sassone*—"the dear Saxon."

London. Virtually overnight, Handel's was established as a musical force to be reckoned with in the English capital.

- Because of his connection to the soon-to-be-English-royals in Hanover, Handel was granted an audience with Queen Anne. His writing, particularly for the trumpet, was an immediate success. Brass instruments in general and the trumpet in particular had long been associated with royalty. The orchestral music Handel wrote for the English royalty is particularly notable for its brass writing and remarkable for its trumpet writing. One example is the “Alla Hornpipe” from the *Water Music*.
- Handel's presence in London put English music on the map. It's true that he profited tremendously from the contemporary English willingness to adopt things German. But Handel's success in London must be credited to Handel himself. He was remarkably clever about ingratiating himself with the English public by composing both Italian-language opera for the nobility and English-language sacred works for the public and the royal family.
- The first such English-language work was Handel's *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne*, which was performed at court on February 6, 1713. Five weeks later—on March 19, 1713—Handel's *Te Deum and Jubilate* in celebration of the Treaty of Utrecht (which brought an end to the War of Spanish Succession) was publicly rehearsed in Whitehall before its “official” premiere at St. Paul's Cathedral.
 - Handel's *Te Deum* was the most important piece of religious music composed in England since the death of the great Henry Purcell 18 years before.
 - Handel went out of his way to study the music of Purcell and cultivated a musical style custom-made for English tastes: a style that featured the compact melodic phrase structures of English songs and religious hymns; was light on melodic embellishment but heavy on complex polyphony; and was more magnificent than intimate. The “Bourrée” from the *Water Music* encompasses this style.

- As a composer and producer of Italian-language operas, Handel made London the most important opera center outside of Italy in the early 1700s. And when the popularity of Italian-language opera dried up in the 1740s, Handel created an entirely new industry by composing and producing English-language oratorios for his increasingly middle-class audiences.
- But even as he got rich composing operas and oratorios, Handel's life and career continued to be closely tied to the British royal family. The *Water Music* was composed for George I in 1717 for a royal procession up the Thames. When George II succeeded his father in 1727, Handel composed four so-called anthems for orchestra and chorus that were performed during the coronation ceremony. Without doubt, Handel was the composer of choice when the English establishment required grand music for special occasions.

Georg and George

- Despite their differences in background and social class, Georg Ludwig of Hanover and George Handel of Halle had much more in common than not. They were both ambitious and hard-working men whose fates were intertwined to an astonishing degree.
- Through the most extraordinary of circumstances, Georg Ludwig—a mid-level German prince only distantly related to the English royal family—became the king of England. Following on the heels of a period of dangerous dynastic instability, Georg created a dynasty that lasted nearly 200 years. To his credit, George I was able to transition from German absolutism to the mixed parliamentary government of the English system.
- As for Handel: without the *caché* of being Kapellmeister to Georg Ludwig, Handel would never have conquered the English as quickly as he did. And without the patronage of the Hanover kings—George

I and George II—Handel would never have written much of the music for which he is best known today. That music—an amalgam of German technique and Italian lyricism—not only came to mirror the Hanoverian dynasty but continues to define British sensibility and national self-identity to this day.

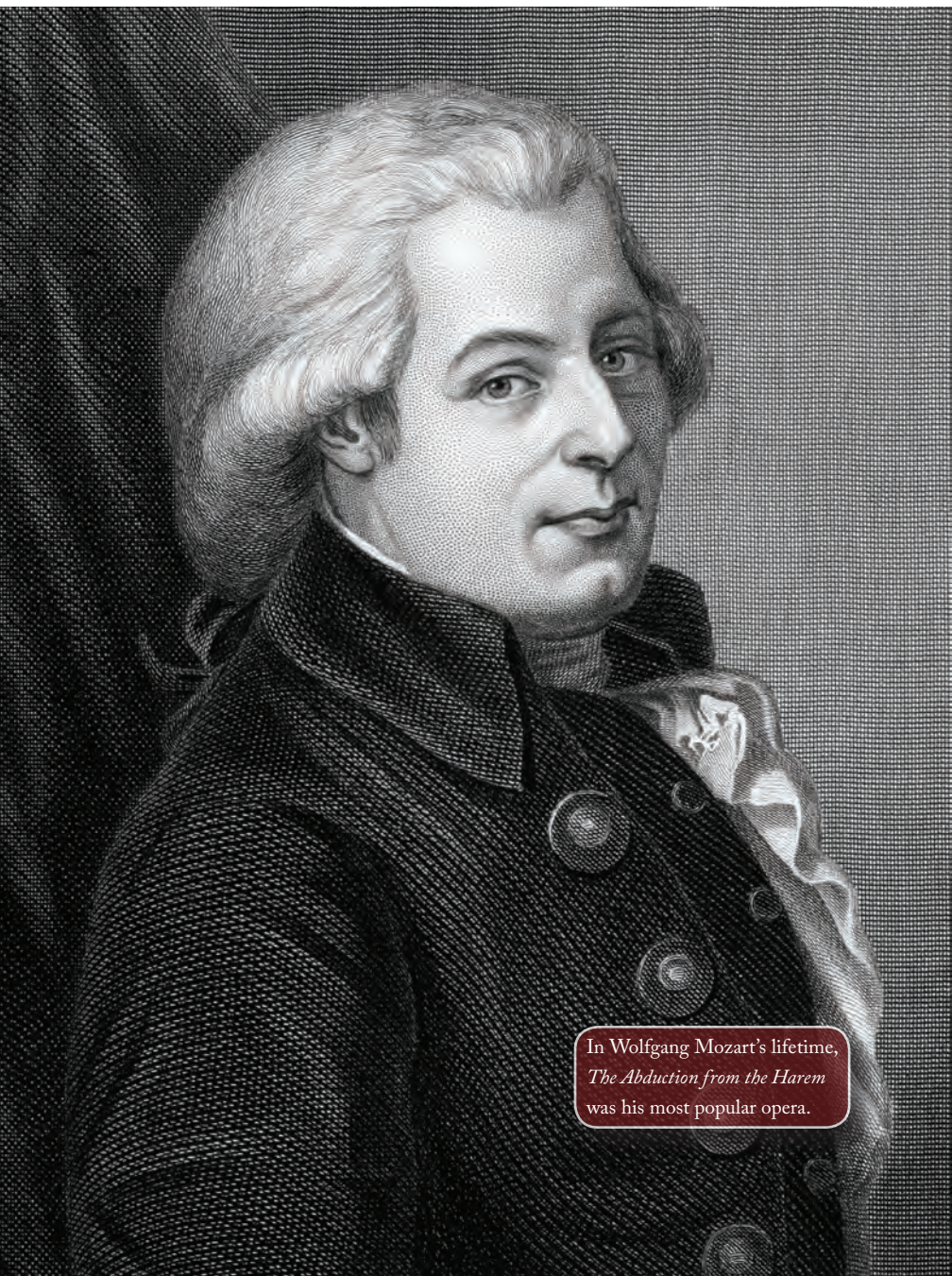
Mozart: *The Abduction from the Harem* (1782)

Lecture 3

On July 16, 1782, Wolfgang Mozart's opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio* ("harem") premiered in Vienna. *The Abduction* was, in Mozart's lifetime, his most popular opera, owing to a number of factors: It is set in colloquial German (as opposed to Italian), which made it accessible to audiences across Austria and Germany. It is also based on the sort of "escape story" that was popular at the time. Much of the action takes place in a harem, increasing its titillation value. It is filled with colorful musical exotica that contemporaries would have identified as being "Turkish." Finally, the opera deals with current events of the late 18th century: the clash between Christianity and Islam.

The Abduction

- At the time Mozart composed *The Abduction from the Harem*, the so-called Turkish Wars—pitting the Islamic Ottoman Empire against Christian Europe—had been going on for 400 years. And, as is so often the case, stereotypically negative depictions of an enemy helped to turn fear into ridicule and ridicule into humor. Mozart's *Abduction* is no exception.
- The villain of the opera is an Ottoman named Osmin. He is the overseer of a palace in which a number of Westerners—captured by pirates—have been installed as slaves. Osmin is fat, oily, and considerably older than the attractive young Christians being held as slaves; he wears a greasy tunic, puffy harem pants, and a turban and sports a large, curved knife tucked into his sash-like belt. He is both cruel and paranoid. Osmin's boss—the pasha Selim—has given him a young,



In Wolfgang Mozart's lifetime,
The Abduction from the Harem
was his most popular opera.

beautiful, blond, English woman named Blondchen, who Osmin keeps under lock and key.

- When we meet Osmin early in Act I, his paranoid fear that another man is going to steal his Blondchen is about to burst. He gives a vicious (and comic) description of precisely what he intends to do to any man he catches near his Blondchen, including beheading, hanging, and more. This is the story, the history, behind this lecture: the centuries-long threat posed to Europe by the Ottoman Turkish Empire.

The Ottoman Empire

- The Ottoman or Turkish Empire was a Sunni Islamic state that posed a direct threat to central and southern Europe for 600 years. This threat—and the cultural collision between Eastern Islam and Western Christianity that it manifested and the love-hate relationship between East and West it generated—shaped European thinking, foreign policy and diplomacy, art, architecture, design, food, and music for hundreds of years.
- The smallish principality that eventually morphed into the Ottoman or Turkish Empire was founded by an Anatolian sultan named Osman in 1299.
 - At the time Osman declared his sultanate, Anatolia—which comprises most of modern Turkey—was a patchwork of independent states, only one of which was ruled by Osman. But Osman was a savvy geopolitico who recognized a growing power vacuum and decided to take advantage of it.
 - To the west, the weakening Christian Byzantine Empire based in Constantinople was losing its influence in Anatolia. To the east, Mongol invaders were driving large numbers of Muslim refugees into Anatolia, many of whom were absorbed into Osman's growing sultanate.
- Osman's forces began absorbing neighboring states, eventually extending his control to the frontiers of the Byzantine Empire. The Ottomans' stunning success had much to do with their use of a legal

entity called the *millet system*, which allowed the various religious and ethnic minorities under the empire's control to maintain their own courts and, within limits, to govern themselves. This system of Islamic law was an example of religious and ethnic pluralism.

- The Ottoman Empire eventually occupied all or part of 43 modern nations. Obviously, an empire of this size was not created overnight. Constantinople—and with it, the Byzantine Empire—fell to the Ottomans in 1453. In 1521, Belgrade—the capital of Serbia—was taken by the longest reigning and most feared of all the Ottoman sultans, Suleiman the Magnificent. In 1526, Suleiman's armies defeated the Hungarian army at the Battle of Mohacs, during which the Hungarian king himself was killed. Transylvania and much of Hungary were occupied, and the road to Vienna lay wide open.
- In September of 1529, Suleiman laid siege to Vienna. Although the Turks outnumbered the defenders some seven to one, Vienna held. Meanwhile, autumn rains brought misery and disease to the ill-clothed Ottoman army. Badly overextended, the Turks suffered from a critical shortage of food and water. The siege was lifted after just three weeks, and Suleiman retreated back to Hungary.
- Three years later, in 1532, Suleiman tried again. This time, he advanced no farther than Güns, a fortress on the Hungarian-Austrian border about 30 miles southeast of Vienna. There, between 700 and 800 Croatian soldiers held off an Ottoman army of roughly 150,000 long enough for the autumn rains to arrive and the Ottomans to withdraw.
- In July of 1683, a Turkish army again laid siege to Vienna. That siege was broken when an allied army led by Jan Sobieski, the king of Poland, destroyed the besiegers at the Battle of Vienna on September 11 and 12, 1683. Ottoman expansion into Europe was thrown into reverse, and the ensuing war—which lasted until 1698—saw the European allies liberate almost all of Hungary.

Turkish Style in Music

- Various sources claim that the rout at the Battle of Vienna was such that the Ottoman military bandsmen dropped their instruments on the spot and fled, which is how Western Europe acquired cymbals and kettledrums.
- The truth, of course, is that Western Europeans had access to cymbals and kettledrums for centuries before 1683. However, cymbals were indeed associated with the Ottoman military, in particular, the Janissaries: the famously ferocious infantry units that had once made up the sultan's bodyguard. Whenever a Western composer wanted to evoke the jingling/jangling of Ottoman military bands and marching troops, he would use cymbals, triangles, bells, and kettledrums to evoke what was instantly recognizable as the "Turkish style."
- For example, in 1701, the Austrian composer Johann Joseph Fux published a *partita*—a collection of dances—entitled *Turcaria*, which loosely translates as "Turkish stuff." The work bears the subtitle "Musical portrait of the siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683." In those sections of music meant to evoke the Ottomans, Fux uses cymbals and kettledrums.
- Beethoven also wrote a famous work in the Turkish style: the "Turkish March" from *The Ruins of Athens*, op. 113 of 1811. Typical of Turkish-style music for the piano, the clang and ring of cymbals is evoked by grace notes.

Background on Mozart

- Wolfgang Mozart was born on January 27, 1756, in what today is the Austrian city of Salzburg. He grew up with the uneasy awareness that the Ottoman Turks were never far away.
- Fresh from his success with his opera *Idomeneo*, Mozart settled permanently in Vienna in 1781, at the age of 25. At the time, Emperor Joseph II had been planning the creation of an imperial German-language opera theater that would be the equal to the long-established

imperial Italian opera theater. Based on the success of *Idomeneo*, Count Franz Xaver Orsini-Rosenberg—the director of the German opera theater—approached Mozart with a commission for a German-language opera.

- In July of 1781—just a few weeks after setting up shop in Vienna—Mozart received a libretto from Count Rosenberg entitled *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*: “*The Abduction from the Harem*.” The libretto, originally written by Christoph Friedrich Bretzner, was adapted for Mozart by the German-born, Vienna-based playwright Gottlieb Stephanie. On August 1, 1781, Mozart wrote to his father that he would write “the overture, the chorus in Act I and the final chorus in the Turkish style.”
- For Mozart and his Viennese contemporaries, the Turkish musical style consisted of moderate-to-fast march music based on the military music of a Janissary band, an ensemble called a *mehter*: music that featured booming kettledrum accents on every downbeat, cymbals, triangles, grace notes, and repetitive rhythmic patterns. Mozart’s overture to *The Abduction from the Harem* is filled with Turkish-style mannerisms, including a triangle heard in high relief.

Pasha Selim: The Noble Turk?

- Earlier in this lecture, we talked about the evil overseer Osmin, an insultingly stereotypical Turk whose paranoia and moral degeneracy drive much of the opera. Another important Turkish character in the opera is the pasha Selim.
- The pasha is a very wealthy man: It is in his seaside villa that the action of the opera takes place. In fact, Pasha Selim initiated the action of the opera when he bought three Europeans from pirates: Constanze, a wealthy Spanish woman; her English maid, Blondchen; and Pedrillo, the valet of Constanze’s fiancé. That fiancé—named Belmonte—has traced the kidnapped trio to Pasha Selim’s pleasure palace and is determined to rescue them.

- Just as Osmin, the evil overseer, has fallen in love with Blondchen, so Pasha Selim has fallen for Constanze. But where Osmin threatens and manhandles Blondchen, Selim treats Constanze with respect and accepts her rejection of his advances with equanimity. In the end—to Osmin's horror—Pasha Selim sets the captives free. Because of his civility and benevolence, Pasha Selim is often referred to in the literature as “the image of the noble Turk.” The opera concludes with a ringing Turkish-style chorus of Janissaries that celebrates the good pasha's munificence!
- However, we discover—during the Act III denouement—that Pasha Selim is not a Turk at all! Rather, he is a Christian nobleman who, for reasons never explained, was robbed of his beloved, deprived of his position and property, and forced to flee to the East, where he has clearly done quite well. In the end, the point is that Pasha Selim is civilized and benevolent because he is not a Turk but a European Christian.

Mozart's Death

- The ongoing conflict between the Austrian Empire and the Ottoman Empire had a direct impact on Mozart's finances, which had a direct impact on his declining mental and physical health and contributed to his death in December 1791.
- In 1781, the newly elevated emperor of Austria, Joseph II, signed an alliance with Catherine the Great of Russia. Catherine—who had long coveted Constantinople—provoked the Ottomans into declaring war on Russia in 1787. Austria honored its alliance with Russia by deploying more the 280,000 troops on the borders of the Turkish Empire. The war was a military and economic disaster for Austria, and whatever territorial gains it achieved were returned to Turkey at the conclusion of the war in 1791.
- Back home in Vienna, there was near universal opposition to the war, partially because of exorbitantly high “war taxes.” Food prices

doubled, and for the first time in Vienna's history, bakeries were looted. In Vienna, the aristocracy cut back on expenditures or left town. The theaters were closed. Concerts and music lessons were cancelled.

- Wolfgang Mozart, his finances already in disarray, saw much of what remained of his income dry up. He died on December 5, 1791: four months and a day after Austria withdrew from the war and made peace with the Ottomans.

Fates of the Austrian and Ottoman Empires

- The 19th century was not kind to either the Austrian or Turkish empires. They both suffered from bloated bureaucracies, waning influence, stagnant economies, and increasingly elderly leadership.
 - The Austrian Empire began the 19th century with a series of devastating defeats at the hands of Napoleon; by the end of the century, it was but a shadow of its former self.
 - The Ottoman Empire simply unraveled: Revolutions in Serbia, Greece, Wallachia, Moldavia, and Montenegro caused the empire to be called “the sick man of Europe” by the mid-19th century. It never got well.
- It is no small irony, then, that after centuries of war and animosity, these two sickly empires were allied in World War I on the losing side, and their defeat spelled their end. It is ironic that two great imperial powers, sworn enemies for 600 years, should go down in defeat and into oblivion as allies.

Haydn: *Mass in the Time of War* (1797)

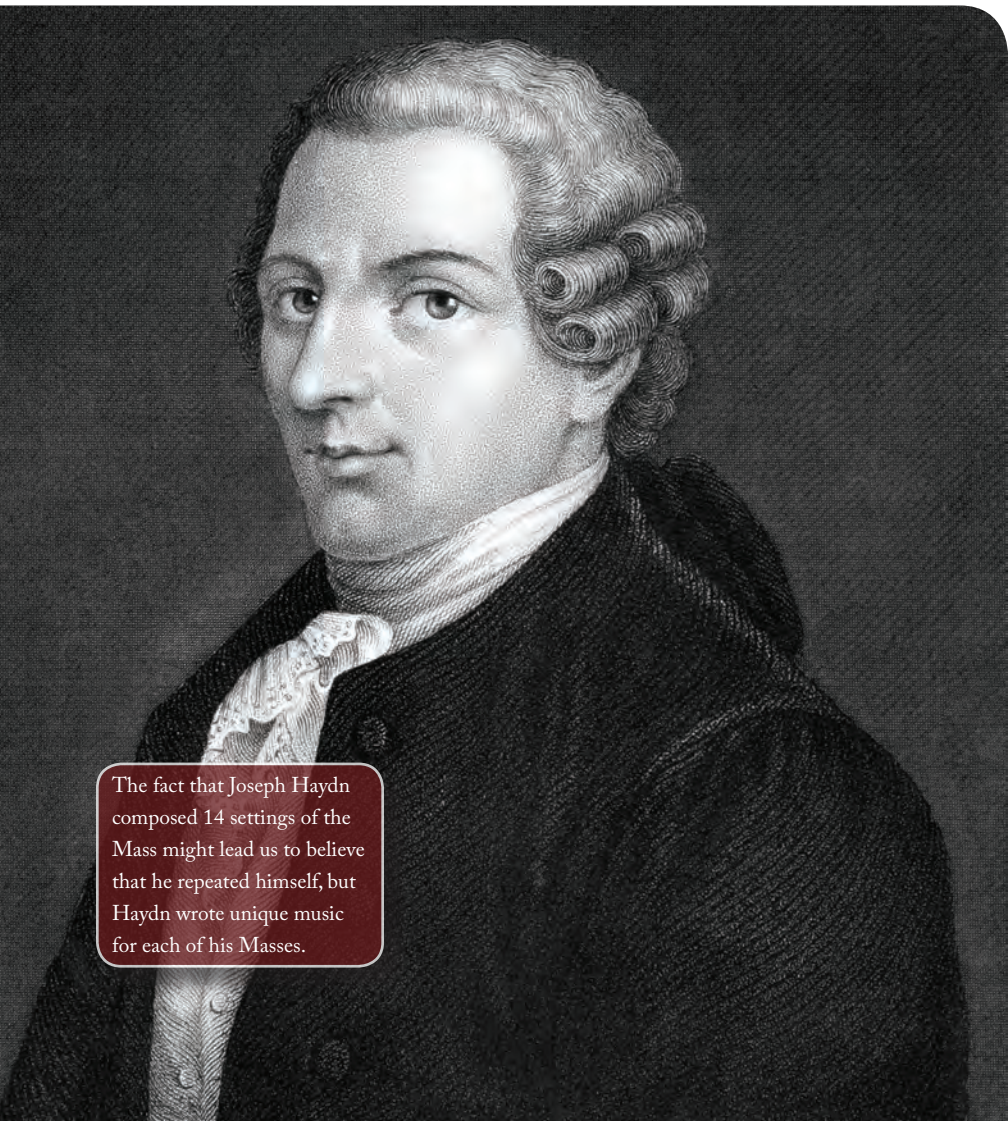
Joseph Haydn was born on March 31, 1732, in the Austrian village of Rohrau, which was then on the border with Hungary. He was raised Catholic and never lapsed. According to his biographer, Georg August Griesinger, Haydn was “strongly convinced in all his heart that all human destiny is under God’s guiding hand, that God rewards good and evil, [and] that all talents come from above.” Across the span of his career, Haydn composed 14 settings of the Mass, including *Mass in the Time of War*. In this lecture, we’ll see how events that began in revolutionary Paris came to inspire the expressive content of a Mass composed to commemorate the name-day of a Hungarian princess.

The Musical Mass

- The Mass is the principal daily service of the Catholic liturgy. Depending on how you count them, the daily Mass consists of anywhere between 17 to 20 sections.
 - Some of these sections are repeated every day. These repeated sections together comprise what’s called the Ordinary of the Mass.
 - The Ordinary consists of six sections of text: the *Kyrie* (“Lord have mercy upon us; Christ have mercy upon us”), *Gloria* (“Glory be to God”), *Credo* (“I believe”), *Sanctus* (“Holy, holy, holy”), *Agnus Dei* (“Lamb of God”), and *Ite missa est* (“Let us bless the Lord and be dismissed”).
- The other sections of the Mass, those that change from day to day, are called the Proper because they are “proper” to particular days in the liturgical calendar.

The Credo in Mass in the Time of War

- Haydn was a devout Catholic, he loved and believed the words of the Mass, and he lavished extraordinarily original music on each of his 14 Masses, the composition of which was, for Haydn, an act of faith.



The fact that Joseph Haydn composed 14 settings of the Mass might lead us to believe that he repeated himself, but Haydn wrote unique music for each of his Masses.

- The exuberance of Haydn's faith is beautifully demonstrated in the *Credo* section of his *Mass in the Time of War*. The *Credo* is the central part of the five-part Ordinary of the Mass. It is the itemized statement of belief made by the faithful. In terms of word count, the *Credo* is longer than the other four sections of the Ordinary put together. In order to get through all those words with some degree of dispatch, musical *Credos* are usually set syllabically—meaning one note per syllable—and with an absolute minimum of repetition and voice overlapping.
- In this Mass, however, the opening of Haydn's *Credo* features polyphonic overlapping of all sorts, as vocal soloists and chorus—collectively, the voices of all humanity—celebrate their shared and unshakeable faith in the Catholic creed.
- Along with celebrating Haydn's faith, this frankly uncharacteristic setting of the *Credo* also celebrates the last line, which translates: "Who for our salvation came down from heaven." In other words, this most uncharacteristic *Credo* is also an expression of Haydn's unwavering conviction that God will be Vienna's salvation in the face of an approaching, atheist Napoleonic army.

The French Revolution

- On January 24, 1789, the French king, Louis XVI, summoned a meeting of the Estates-General in Paris to deal with widespread middle- and working-class unrest. The Estates-General divided the population of France into three groups: the clergy, the aristocracy, and everybody else (some 95 percent of the population).
- For a month, the First and Second Estates—the clergy and aristocracy—refused to meet with the Third Estate as equals. Consequently, on June 17, 1789, the representatives of the Third Estate declared themselves a National Assembly of the People tasked with creating a constitution.



Although his nation was calling for a constitutional monarchy, King Louis XVI was set on maintaining absolutism.

- In essence, the representatives of the Third Estate, along with a small but growing number of defectors from the First and Second Estates, proclaimed that their National Assembly represented the French nation.
- Of course, King Louis XVI revoked the National Assembly and its plan to write a constitution. At the same time, French soldiers began to pour into Paris. Convinced that Louis and his government were about

to crush the assembly by force, crowds took to the streets, and rioting and looting broke out. On July 14, 1789, a mob attacked the Bastille fortress, which housed a substantial armory.

- Across France, civil authority crumbled. On July 17, 1789, Louis XVI, having been abandoned by the army, was forced to do the unthinkable. He called on the assembly at its headquarters in the city hall and bowed his head in submission to his new masters.
- Meanwhile, other members of the royal family and the aristocracy fled to neighboring countries, where they put their money and influence to work persuading foreign monarchs to march on Paris to save Louis XVI, punish the revolutionaries, and show the rest of Europe that such anti-monarchical activities would not be tolerated. But the European powers declined to intervene in French domestic affairs.
- In August 1789, Louis XVI refused to endorse legislation abolishing feudalism and to uphold the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*. In response, the national mood in France shifted toward extremism, which had a devastating impact on France's foreign policy. The National Assembly became more xenophobic, more aggressive, and less conciliatory toward what it claimed were France's natural enemies: the monarchies of Europe.
- The fragile balance among the revolutionary spirit of the streets, the appearance of extreme factions within the government, and the constitutional monarchists who held out hope that Louis could be convinced to participate in the government was destroyed during the night of June 20 and 21, 1791. On that night, the royal family, having snuck out of Paris in disguise, was arrested in the town of Varennes in northeast France.
- They were headed for the Austrian Netherlands, which was ruled by Queen Marie-Antoinette's brother, the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold II. Presumably, Louis intended to engineer a counterrevolution once he was safely out of France. But the royal escape was thwarted,

and Louis and his family were returned to Paris in disgrace. It was the turning point in the revolution. Louis and Marie-Antoinette were ultimately charged with treason and executed in 1793.

Trouble on the Continent

- Louis's arrest in June of 1791 also marked a turning point for his fellow European monarchs. The laissez-faire attitude they had exhibited toward the revolution in 1789 was dead by 1791. Belatedly, they began to realize that the French were preparing to export revolution.
- The Austrians and the Prussians were the first to act. In August of 1791, they jointly issued the Declaration of Pillnitz, which the radicalized French government took as a veiled declaration of war. The French themselves declared war on April 20, 1792. Four months later, on August 19, an army made up of Austrians, Prussians, Hessians, and French émigrés marched into France.
- The Prussians issued the Brunswick Manifesto, which informed France that the allied invasion was intended to rescue King Louis from house arrest at the Tuileries Palace and return him to the throne. It indicated that any resistance would be mercilessly crushed.
 - Rather than inspiring fear, however, the manifesto galvanized the French nation against the invading allies and opened the door for the worst of the radicals to take control of the French government.
 - It also sealed the king and queen's fate. A revolutionary mob stormed the Tuileries Palace, took the royal family as prisoners, and compelled the Legislative Assembly to suspend the monarchy.
- Thus began the French Revolutionary Wars, during which revolutionary France had to fight off the combined forces of Prussia and Austria. By 1793, France was also at war with most of the kingdoms of Italy, Great Britain, the Dutch Republic, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire. French armies responded magnificently, and within 10 years, French armies would be threatening—and, eventually, occupying—much of Europe and northern Africa.

- In fact, the Revolutionary Wars preserved the revolution. The external threat allowed the revolutionary government to destroy the remaining strongholds of royalist loyalty in France. Freed from any need to moderate its actions, the government executed Louis XIV on January 21, 1793, and instituted the Reign of Terror between September 1793 and July 1794.

The Rise of Napoleon

- Among the victorious French army was a recently demoted artillery general: a smart, ambitious 27-year-old Corsican named Napoleon Bonaparte. He had “earned” his demotion by refusing to serve in a murderous “pacification” campaign against French royalists in west-central France. He was packed off to Paris and told to report to the Committee of Public Safety.
- Just 18 days after Napoleon was struck from the list of generals in regular service, a counterrevolutionary uprising began in Paris. On October 3, 1795, royalists in Paris declared a rebellion against the National Convention.
- Napoleon was assigned to defend the Tuileries Palace, where the National Convention was headquartered. On October 5, the royalists attacked, and Napoleon and his cannon were ready. Some 1,400 royalists were killed, and the rest fled for their lives.
- Instantly, Napoleon was the toast of Paris. On November 2, 1795, a new government was installed—the Directorate—and Napoleon became its darling. He was immediately given command of the army of Italy.

The Italian Campaign

- The Directory had inherited a war with Austria, but what it really wanted was peace: peace to stabilize the government and the French economy and, in so doing, to finally bring the revolution to an end.

But the only sort of peace the Directory could accept would be one achieved through victory.

- With the Habsburg capital of Vienna as the final objective, Bonaparte was instructed to invade Italy, then move northeast to attack Vienna while two other French armies invaded Germany and, moving eastward, enveloped Vienna in a three-way pincer.
- Napoleon took command of the army of Italy on March 27, 1796, and in less than two months, had conquered most of northern Italy. This incredible advance was completed before the other two French armies detailed with taking Vienna had even begun their advance into Germany.
- With time on his hands, Napoleon was instructed to invade central Italy. The objective was to extort as much money as possible out of the Italian principalities in his path and to flush the British out of Italy. In just 28 days, he achieved both objectives, establishing French hegemony in Italy with almost no losses to his command.

Situation in Vienna

- The events in Italy were observed from Vienna with horror. Bonaparte's army of Italy was perceived not just as invincible but as evil incarnate. It was at this time and under these circumstances that Haydn composed his *Mass in a Time of War*.
- Haydn had been in London, but he returned to Vienna in 1795. He was employed part-time by Prince Nikolaus II Esterhazy. Starting in 1796, Nikolaus tasked Haydn with composing an annual Mass in honor of the name day of his Hungarian wife, Princess Maria Josepha Hermenegild.
- In two passages, the kettledrums are most pronounced: at the conclusion of the *Sanctus* and in the *Agnus Dei*. The *Sanctus* concludes with a passage called the "Benedictus" and this line: "*Hosanna in excelsis*" ("Hosanna in the highest").

- Haydn's use of trumpets and drums in the *Agnus Dei* converts this ordinarily lyric and contemplative final section of the Mass into a fire-breathing affirmation of military triumph.
- The first half of the *Agnus Dei* has the tragic spirit of a funeral march. It represents the pain and loss that must be borne in wartime.
- The second half is brilliant, martial, and triumphant. Haydn's message here is clear: "Grant us peace, Lord, through victory."

The Austrian Surrender

- Napoleon resumed his march toward Vienna in March of 1797. The moment of truth for Austria occurred at the Battle of Tarvis in what today is the far northeastern corner of Italy. The battle, fought between March 21 and 23, 1797, was a rout by Napoleon.
- On April 7, with Napoleon's forward troops only 60 miles from Vienna, the Austrians requested a ceasefire. Acting on his own authority, Napoleon negotiated an armistice that was signed on April 18, 1797.
- The army of Italy was Napoleon's first command, and he had made the most of it. In less than a year, he had defeated five armies, four of which were larger than his own. Along the way, he took 160,000 prisoners and sent enough loot back to Paris to keep the Directory solvent.
- As for Haydn, it's no small irony that among the last earthly sounds he heard before his death 13 years later was the bombardment of Vienna by yet another Napoleon-led army.

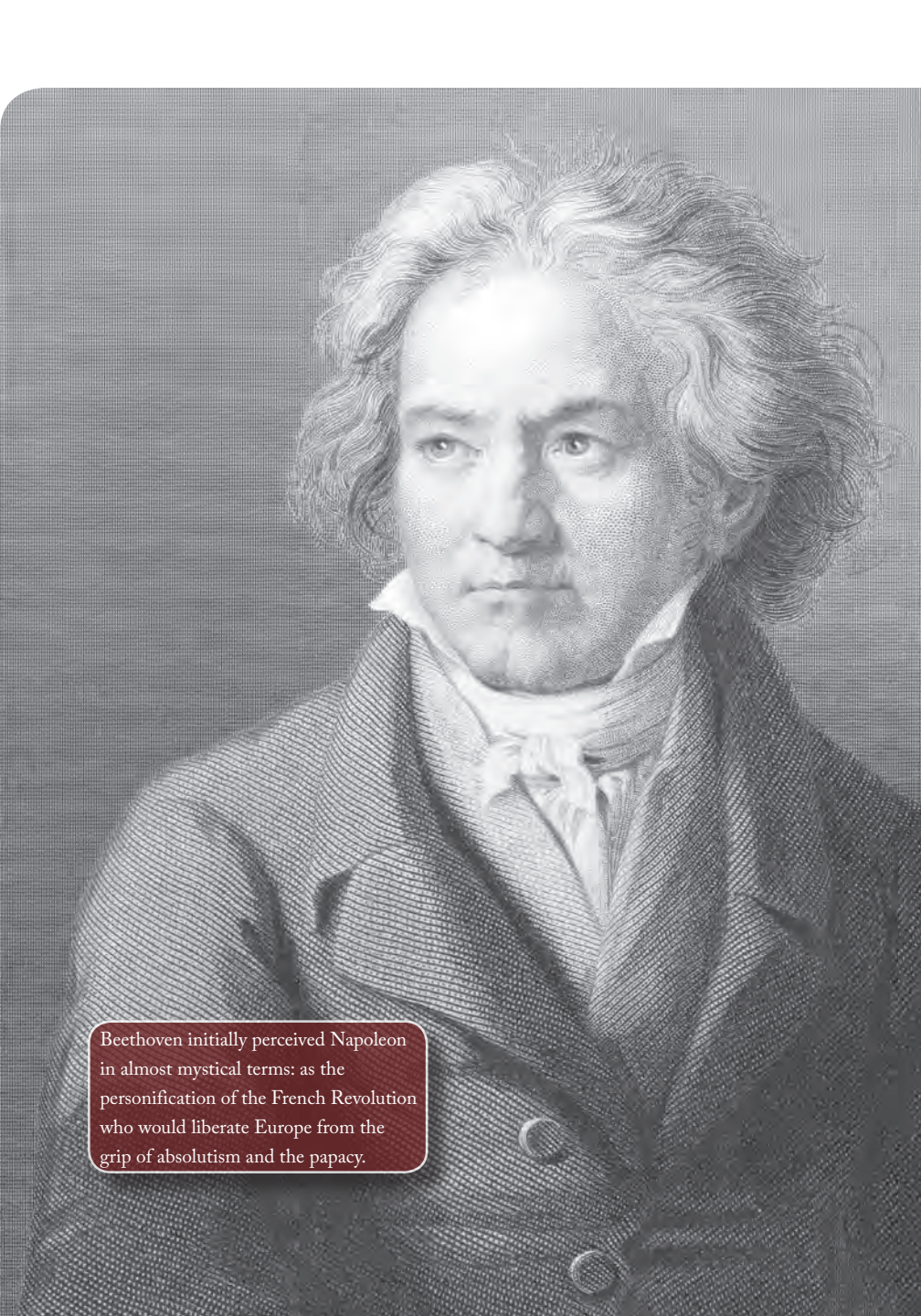
Beethoven: The *Farewell* Sonata (1810)

Lecture
5

It is difficult today to appreciate the degree to which Napoleon and the revolution he was presumed to embody loomed over Europe during the first half of the 18th century. Napoleon's admirers included such German and Austrian patriots as Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Friedrich Schiller. As for Ludwig van Beethoven, his identification with Napoleon was personal. Napoleon—a Florentine among Corsicans and a Corsican among the French—was an outsider who had risen to the heights thanks to his own genius and industry. For Beethoven—a Rhinelander among the Viennese, hearing impaired among the hearing healthy, a man of genius struggling to achieve the sublime—Napoleon Bonaparte was his soulmate.

Beethoven and Napoleon

- In 1803, Beethoven told his friends that he was moving to Paris—the home of Napoleon and the revolution. But he became enraged when he learned, in 1804, that Napoleon had crowned himself emperor. He violently scratched out the word *Bonaparte* from the title page of a symphony he was writing and retitled it *Eroica*, “*The Heroic Symphony*.”
- Beethoven didn't move to Paris, but Napoleon's actions would continue to shape his life and music for the next 11 years. Indeed, Beethoven composed a number of major works in response to Napoleon's actions, including *Wellington's Victory* of 1813 and the Piano Sonata in E-flat Major, op. 81a, also known as the *Farewell* Sonata, of 1810.



Beethoven initially perceived Napoleon in almost mystical terms: as the personification of the French Revolution who would liberate Europe from the grip of absolutism and the papacy.

- The *Farewell* Sonata is so-called because it commemorates the departure from Vienna of Beethoven's friend, student, and patron Archduke Johannes Joseph Rainer Rudolf in the face of an advancing Napoleonic army. Beethoven could not have been more explicit about the "meaning" of this sonata, as its three movements are entitled: "Farewell," "Absence," and "Return."
- Beethoven's *Farewell* Sonata offers us but the tiniest slice of how one resident of Vienna was affected by the events of the time. But the big story behind the sonata is the amazing fortitude, resilience, and ongoing ineptitude of the Austrian Empire in the face of Napoleon Bonaparte.

War and the French Economy

- When the French Revolutionary Wars began in 1792, the French seemed genuinely to have believed their slogan "War to the castles; peace to the cottages!" Unfortunately, this idealism didn't last long. The poorly supplied and generally unpaid French Revolutionary armies were forced, by necessity, to live off the land they invaded, which meant stealing from the very peasants they were presumably liberating.
- By 1795, France had more than 1 million soldiers in the field. The newly formed French government, the Directory, was broke and handing out IOUs. Thus, the directors decided to wage war for profit by sending Napoleon into Italy.
- As it turned out, Napoleon's genius for battlefield improvisation was equaled by his genius for extortion and looting. Millions of francs worth of cash, precious metals, jewels, and artworks were "requisitioned" and sent back to France. For their part, the soldiers looted everything they could.
- The economy of postrevolutionary France became dependent on war. Particularly ripe for plunder was the sprawling Austrian-Habsburg Empire.

- Of all the forces that fought against France between 1792 and 1815, it was the Austrian-Habsburg army that carried the greatest burden of war. Defeated and humiliated repeatedly, the Austrians nevertheless continued to rise from the ashes.
- What we refer to as Austria—or the Habsburg Empire—was a sprawling, multinational empire that stretched across Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. This territory was ruled out of Vienna by the Habsburg emperor, also known as the Holy Roman Emperor.

The War of the First Coalition, 1792–1797

- On April 20, 1792, the revolutionary French government—convinced that it was about to be attacked—declared war on Austria. Nine days later, the French invaded the Austrian Netherlands, which today is the country of Belgium. The French were convinced that they would be welcomed as liberators and that the Austrian garrison would panic and run. But the French army was not welcomed, and it broke and ran at the first sign of Austrian resistance.
- The Austrians and their Prussian allies then invaded France in July 1792. But the Austrians and Prussians had invaded with a force far too small to achieve their purposes, and within a couple of months, it was clear that they were going nowhere. The Prussians decided that the invasion was a mistake and walked away. The Austrians had no choice but to follow suit.
- The Austrian and Prussian retreat revitalized the French armies, which successfully went on the offensive on the Rhine. The retreat also further empowered the radical faction in Paris, which convicted King Louis XVI of high treason and crimes against the state and executed him on January 21, 1793.
- Having killed its king, France was instantly perceived as a rogue state. Spain, England, Holland, and the Kingdom of Sardinia joined Austria and Prussia in war against France. Thus was born the First Coalition.

But these forces fell apart when faced by the numerical superiority of France's army.

- By the end of 1795, the First Coalition was down to only two members: the Kingdom of Sardinia—meaning northwest Italy—and Austria. Both Sardinia and Austria met their fate at the hands of the French army of Italy.
- Napoleon's advance troops were just 80 miles southwest of Vienna in April 1797 when the Austrians sued for peace. The result was the Treaty of Campo Formio, which was signed on October 18, 1797. Among other territories, the Austrian Netherlands was ceded to France and various Mediterranean islands.

Napoleon Ascendant

- Napoleon returned to Paris a national hero. He leveraged his fame by proposing an invasion of Egypt, claiming that this would protect France's commercial interests while undermining British commerce and access to India.
- While Napoleon was in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, a Second Coalition was formed back in Europe, uniting Austria, Great Britain, Portugal, the Kingdom of Naples, Russia, and the Ottoman Turks. Although this Second Coalition would last no longer than the first, it started well. With the Austrians in the lead, the coalition scored some major victories; the French were pushed to the wall in Switzerland and ejected from Italy.
- These losses brought down the government in Paris. Napoleon, still in Egypt, was recalled by a group plotting a coup d'état. Their plan was for Napoleon to take over the military and protect the coup. But the 30-year-old Bonaparte managed to seize power himself.
- Even as Napoleon seized power, the Second Coalition fell apart. Political infighting caused the British and Russians to leave. Once again, Austria

was the last man standing, and once again, the Austrian army became Napoleon's whipping boy—first at the Battle of Marengo on June 14, 1800, then at the Battle of Hohenlinden on December 3, 1800.

- Once again, Austria sued for peace. The Treaty of Lunéville was signed in February 1801. Convinced that Austria would now behave itself, the terms of the treaty were mild: Austria was merely required to adhere to the conditions of the earlier Treaty of Campo Formio and to relinquish some lands in Germany. This treaty lasted for four years, until Austria joined Russia and Great Britain in the Third Coalition.
- Unfortunately, the Third Coalition met its end on December 2, 1805, at the Battle of Austerlitz in Moravia. Generally regarded as Napoleon's single greatest victory, it was at Austerlitz that he annihilated a much larger Russian and Austrian army. The Russian army limped east to Poland, and the Austrians once again sued for peace.
- The Treaty of Pressburg was signed on December 26, 1805. At the time, the French were no longer inclined to be lenient.
 - Large swatches of Italy and Bavaria were ceded to France. A war indemnity of 40 million francs was levied, and Vienna and its environs were occupied by the French army.
 - The crowning blow was Napoleon's creation of the Confederation of the Rhine, a collection of two dozen German states that together became a buffer zone between France and Austria. With the creation of the confederation, the Holy Roman Empire, which had been in existence since the year 962, ceased to exist.
- In 1806 and 1807, France crushed the Fourth Coalition, which had combined the forces of Prussia, Russia, Saxony, Sweden, and Great Britain. Seemingly invincible, Napoleon then made the mistake he'd regret for the rest of his life: In 1807, he allowed himself to be sucked into war in Portugal and Spain. This Peninsular War was Napoleon's Vietnam: an unwinnable war, fought in the harshest of conditions against guerillas and an organized army.

- In October 1808, with Napoleon and most of his *grande armée* headed off to Spain, Austria allied itself with Great Britain and received in return a loan with which to finance yet another war with France. This Fifth Coalition, however, was no coalition at all; when Austria invaded Bavaria on April 10, 1809, it was all by itself.
- The Fifth Coalition had no more success against France than the first four. Within just a few weeks, Napoleon's armies were advancing on Vienna for the second time in three years.

Attack on Vienna

- Those individuals with the means to flee Vienna—meaning the royalty and aristocracy—did so on May 4, 1809. The rest of the population—meaning the people who had not made war on France—were left behind to fend for themselves. Among them was Beethoven, who found refuge in the house of his brother Casper.
- On May 10, the French surrounded the city. Napoleon took up residence at the Schönbrunn Palace outside the city walls and, from there, sent a message to the commandant of Vienna, Archduke Maximilian: Surrender or be bombed. Archduke Maximilian refused, and the bombardment commenced the following day.
- In fact, Napoleon's battery consisted of only 20 howitzers. They caused minimal damage but spread maximum panic, which was what Napoleon had counted on. The instrument of surrender was signed at 2:00 a.m. on May 13, and Vienna was occupied. Just 33 days had passed since Austria had begun the war.
- Among those who had evacuated the city in May was Archduke Johannes Joseph Rainer Rudolf. Beethoven dedicated more important works to Rudolf than to any other single person, including the *Farewell* Sonata; the *Missa Solemnis*; the Sonata for Violin and Piano, op. 96; the Trio for Violin, 'Cello, and Piano, op. 97; Piano Concerti nos. 4 and 5; the Piano Sonata, op. 111; and the *Grosse Fuge*, op. 133.

- The *Farewell* Sonata is about Archduke Rudolf's departure from Vienna on May 4, 1809, in the face of the French invasion, the pain of his absence, and the joy of his return.
- As mentioned earlier, the introduction begins a drooping, descending motive over which Beethoven wrote the word "Lebewohl"—"Farewell." This descending motive is found everywhere in the first movement, and each appearance carries with it the same meaning as the one so explicitly assigned by Beethoven at the beginning of the movement: farewell.
- The second movement is entitled "Absence." The music here restlessly seeks but does not quite find a center of thematic gravity, a perfect metaphor for the unfulfilled yearning that absence creates.
- The third movement—entitled "Return"—begins with an introduction that is as joyful as the first-movement introduction was sad and wistful. The manic-euphoria of this introduction is followed by a *gigue*—a dance—depicting the joy of reunion.

Surrender of Vienna

- The surrender of Vienna in May of 1809 did not end the Fifth Coalition. That death-blow came two months later, on July 5 and 6, 1809, when Napoleon and his army destroyed the Austrians at the Battle of Wagram, about 10 miles northeast of Vienna.
- The Treaty of Schönbrunn was signed in occupied Vienna on October 14, 1809. This time, Napoleon was determined to punish the Austrians. A massive war indemnity was dropped on Austria, which was forced to join Napoleon's Continental System. The treaty also stripped Austria of Croatia and the regions of Salzburg, West Galicia, Tarnopol, and Trieste. All told, the Austrian Empire lost one-sixth of its population.
- It remains something of a miracle, then, that Austria would rise once again and, as a member of the Sixth Coalition, play a major role in Napoleon's defeat. It's a story that will be told when we discuss another of Beethoven's works: *Wellington's Victory*.

Beethoven: *Wellington's Victory* (1813)

Lecture
6

Beethoven's 15-minute-long orchestra work *Wellington's Victory* was, in his lifetime, the single most popular and profitable of his works. Artistically, *Wellington's Victory* is, in the words of Herbert Weinstock, "an atrocious potboiler"—without any doubt the worst "major" piece of music ever written by a major composer. The truth is, we can't evaluate *Wellington's Victory* merely as an artwork, because it's much more than that: It's a snapshot of its time and place, a mirror of the extravagant exuberance and hope that followed a series of French defeats that foretold the end of Napoleon.

Overview of *Wellington's Victory*

- *Wellington's Victory* is cast in two parts. The first part is entitled "The Battle," and the second part, "Victory Symphony." The battle commemorated by the piece was fought in Spain on June 21, 1813, between a French army led by Napoleon's brother Joseph Bonaparte and an English army led by Arthur Wellesley, duke of Wellington. The victory celebrated in the second part is, obviously, Wellington's victory over the French.
- Following an introduction, the battle music begins and seems to go on forever. Two bass drums portray the French and English artillery. Ratchets are used to portray the rattle of musket fire. Admittedly, the compositional genre of battle music rarely aspires to high art, but this music does not even qualify as low art.
- By the 1820s, the patriotism that had made *Wellington's Victory* so incredibly popular in 1813 and 1814 had dissipated, and the piece came to be seen for what it was.



Central to Beethoven's reinvention of himself as a hero battling and overcoming fate was the mythical image of Napoleon, the "little corporal" who came to encompass the world through the power of his own will and genius.

Beethoven's Ambivalence

- The word that best represents Beethoven's attitude toward Napoleon is *ambivalence*. It was an ambivalence shared by many of his generation. Napoleon had initially been perceived as a savior who promised to bring about a new age by liberating Europe from the shackles of monarchy and papacy. But in the end, Napoleon gladly horse-traded with the papacy and crowned himself emperor: Having promised republicanism, he delivered despotism.

- There was nothing ambivalent, however, about Napoleon's success. After a series of astonishing military victories, he took control of the French government as First Consul on November 9, 1799. He was then crowned emperor on December 2, 1804. Napoleon's regime proceeded to reorder and modernize French culture and society even as his wars of conquest continued across the continent. By 1810, his Greater French Empire included Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, and most of what today is Germany and Poland.
- Beethoven's ambivalence toward Napoleon was deepened immeasurably by his own personal identification with the man. They both saw themselves as outsiders: common-born provincial foreigners living and working among urban elites. They each rose from obscurity thanks to their genius and determination. They were both children of the Enlightenment and thoroughly modern men.
- When Beethoven experienced a near-suicidal depression in the autumn of 1802 owing to his progressive hearing loss, he managed to bring himself out of it by reinventing himself as a man and artist battling and triumphing over fate itself. Beethoven's personal reinvention was nothing less than a musical revolution, in that it effectively placed personal self-expression ahead of the traditions, rituals, and niceties of the classical style.
- Beethoven's Symphony no. 3, largely composed in 1803 and completed in 1804, was his "coming-out" piece, his first major public work to exhibit his new self-expressive path. Beethoven originally entitled the symphony *Bonaparte*, but when he heard about Napoleon's coronation as emperor, he flew into a rage and threw out the dedication to Napoleon. He did not, however, throw out the symphony, which came to be known as the *Eroica*, or "*Heroic Symphony*."

Beethoven as a Viennese

- By removing the dedication to Bonaparte from his Third Symphony and deciding against a move to Paris, Beethoven experienced a

subtle but powerful psychological transformation. By 1804, he'd been headquartered in Vienna for 12 years, since 1792. But he never truly felt at home there. By forswearing the move to Paris in 1804, Beethoven—advertently or inadvertently—was finally putting down roots in Vienna.

- In May 1809, Napoleon and his army again occupied Vienna. Beethoven suffered physically, emotionally, and financially, losing most of his savings thanks to the runaway inflation and ruinous taxes that were imposed during the occupation to pay off Austria's war indemnity to France.
- Immediately after Vienna was occupied, a music-loving French officer named Baron de Trémont decided to visit and meet his idol, "Louis van Beethoven." The baron approached the composer Luigi Cherubini and Beethoven's friend Anton Reicha to arrange an introduction, but both men refused, stating that Beethoven hated the French. Nevertheless, the baron went to Beethoven's home and was finally admitted for the first of what became a series of lengthy visits. According to the baron, Napoleon was never far from Beethoven's thoughts.

The Peninsular War

- In terms of Napoleon's impact on Beethoven's career, no single event loomed larger than the defeat of a French army in Spain on June 21, 1813, a defeat commemorated by Beethoven in *Wellington's Victory*.
- What Vietnam was for the United States and Afghanistan for the Soviet Union, so the Iberian Peninsula—Spain and Portugal—was for Napoleon in 1816: a war contested on an asymmetrical battlefield that could often not be fought by traditional means.
- Between 1808 and 1813, the French sustained more than 300,000 casualties in Iberia and poured billions of gold francs into the campaign. Nevertheless, the resistance from the population was such that the Peninsular War became a people's war, one that inspired and encouraged Napoleon's enemies across Europe.

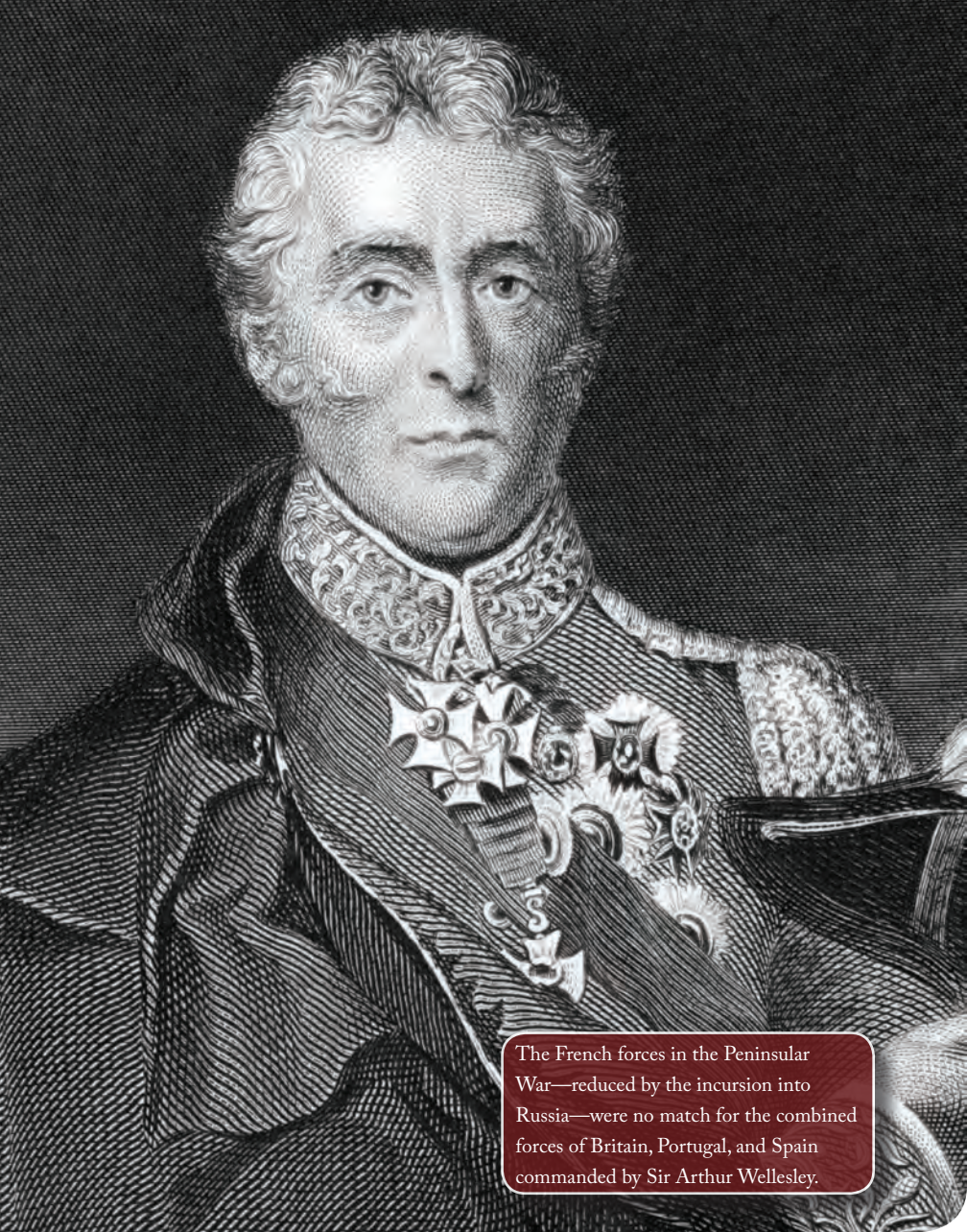
- Two events led to the Peninsular War, the first of which was the War of the Pyrenees, which was the Iberian theater of the War of the First Coalition. The war pitted the young French Republic against Spain and Portugal and ran from March 1793 to July 1795. France won, and Spain, in defeat, signed an alliance with the French. But Portugal refused to make peace.
- In November 1806, continental Europe was enjoying a rare bit of peace, as Napoleon had either conquered or was allied with virtually every major power on the continent. The exception was Great Britain. Thus, on November 21, 1806, Napoleon issued the Berlin Decree; it installed the Continental System across continental Europe and forbade any European country from trading or communicating with Great Britain. The Continental System was an economic blockade that, in the end, did much more damage to France and her allies than to Great Britain.
- The regent and future king of Portugal, John VI, had no intention of honoring France's continental blockade. Ever the gambler, Napoleon saw this "problem" as an opportunity to invade Portugal and occupy Spain, which though presumably a French ally, had been surreptitiously trading with the Brits.
- The Peninsular War began on October 18, 1807, when a French army of 25,000 began its march on Lisbon. The French arrived in Lisbon on November 30, only to discover that a flotilla of 54 ships, bearing some 19,000 people—including the Portuguese royal family and court—had sailed off to safety in Brazil the day before. France had taken Portugal almost without firing a shot and now had an army at the back of its erstwhile ally, Spain.
- Under the pretext of reinforcing Portugal, French troops continued to flow across Spain, where they began to occupy cities and fortifications. It took some time for the Spanish royal family to figure out what was happening. By the time it did, it was too late: In February 1808, Napoleon ordered his troops to seize a series of vital Spanish fortresses and cities, including Madrid and Barcelona. The Spanish

royals were undone and forced to abdicate in March. Napoleon appointed his older brother Joseph to rule Spain as Joseph I.

- The uprisings began almost immediately. The most famous of them—the Dos de Mayo (“Second of May”)—occurred in Madrid in 1808, when a mob attacked the French garrison. The uprising was mercilessly crushed, and hundreds of men were executed by firing squad the next day. The killings in Madrid thoroughly discredited French claims that they had occupied Spain in order to protect it.
- Representatives of various Spanish insurgent groups traveled together to London, arriving on June 7, 1808. After five weeks of negotiations, they convinced the British government that it was in its best interest to intervene in Spain. On August 1, 1808, a force of 9,000 British soldiers under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley landed in Portugal.

The Defeat of France

- The victory over Napoleonic France was assured by three events: the retreat from Moscow in the fall of 1812; the Battle of Vitoria in the Basque country of northern Spain on June 21, 1813; and the Battle of Leipzig (or Battle of the Nations), fought between October 16 and 19, 1813.
- With these defeats, the myth of Napoleon’s invincibility was shattered. His alliances began to unravel. On February 29, 1813, King Frederick Wilhelm III of Prussia abandoned the Continental System and allied Prussia with Russia. On March 3, Sweden allied with Great Britain.
- On August 12, 1813—in direct response to the French defeat at the Battle of Vitoria—Austria revoked its treaties with France and joined what would turn out to be the Sixth Coalition. Austria put more than 300,000 troops into the field and called up more.
- The decisive battle of the War of the Sixth Coalition took place in Leipzig, in what today is central Germany, between October 16 and



The French forces in the Peninsular War—reduced by the incursion into Russia—were no match for the combined forces of Britain, Portugal, and Spain commanded by Sir Arthur Wellesley.

19, 1813. It involved more than 600,000 troops and was the bloodiest battle of the Napoleonic Wars. Napoleon's army was routed and retreated toward France.

Beethoven in Love

- The French occupiers departed Vienna after the signing of the Treaty of Schönbrunn on October 14, 1809, and something approaching normalcy gradually returned to Austrian lands.
- Roughly 18 months later—during the spring of 1811—Beethoven fell in love. It's almost certain that the woman was Antonie Brentano, an aristocratic mother of four. It's also almost certain that she and Beethoven physically consummated their affair and that she offered to leave her husband and children for Beethoven. But in July 1812, Beethoven, realizing that he was in over his head, broke off the affair.
- Beethoven was devastated and sank into depression. By 1813, he had fallen into such a state that he could no longer compose. But sometime during the summer of 1813, his friend Johann Nepomuk Mälzel proposed that Beethoven compose a piece of music celebrating Wellington's victory at Vitoria.

Celebration in Vienna

- The news of Napoleon's rout and retreat from Leipzig was greeted in the Austrian Empire with great joy. In December 1813, two concerts were given in Vienna for the benefit of Austrian and Bavarian soldiers who had been wounded in action. It was at these concerts that Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory* was first performed, to a level of acclaim that was nothing short of hysterical.
- The opening of *Wellington's Victory* depicts, with painful predictability, the approach of the two armies. Wellington's army enters first. We know it's Wellington, because after some drumming and a brief fanfare, the orchestra plays Thomas Arne's patriotic song "Rule Britannia."

- The entrance of the French army is marked by more drums and another fanfare, followed by a popular French marching song, “Marlborough’s March to War.” A challenge and counter-challenge are then offered by dueling fanfares, followed by the beginning of the battle.
- The second large part of *Wellington’s Victory*, “The Victory March,” is shockingly artless and cravenly jingoistic.
- *Wellington’s Victory* brought Beethoven a level of popularity in Vienna he had never before achieved. But it didn’t last, because it wasn’t rooted in anything lasting. Rather, the popularity generated by *Wellington’s Victory* was rooted in Austrian pride and patriotism that, for a brief period of time, Beethoven came to embody.
- But when peace finally came, Beethoven’s bubble burst, and he entered a long, painful, fallow period. There would be more masterworks and more triumphs, but he would never again experience—in his lifetime—the celebrity that *Wellington’s Victory* brought him.

Berlioz/de L'Isle: “La Marseillaise” (1830)

“One-hit wonders” is a phrase we use to identify people who achieved success once in their lifetimes, never to do so again. Like other forms of music, concert music has seen its fair share of one-hit wonders, including Max Bruch’s Violin Concerto in G Minor of 1867, Engelbert Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* of 1893, and Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana* of 1936. To this list, we can add Claude-Joseph Rouget de L’Isle, who wrote the words and music of a song he entitled “War Song of the Army of the Rhine.” We know it as “The Marseillaise,” and it became the French national anthem. In 1830, it was arranged for vocal soloists, chorus, and orchestra by Hector Berlioz.

“La Marseillaise”

- Claude-Joseph Rouget de L’Isle was a career army officer, an able poet, and a credible composer, violinist, and singer. On May 1, 1791, he was posted to the French city of Strasbourg, which sits on the western bank of the Rhine River, across from Germany. In this location, both Strasbourg and Rouget de L’Isle were in the crosshairs of the First Coalition, the alliance between Austria and Prussia that invaded France in July 1792, intent on putting Louis XVI back on the French throne and destroying the revolution.
- On April 20, 1792—three months before the Austrian-Prussian invasion—France declared war on Austria. On April 25, swept up by the spirit of the time, Rouget de L’Isle wrote the words and music to what he called “War Song of the Army of the Rhine.”
- The song quickly became a rallying cry for revolutionary France. Among the thousands who learned it by heart was a young doctor

named François Mireur, who had just received a commission in the French revolutionary army.

- Mireur was sent to the port city of Marseille in southeast France to organize volunteers. He sang the song at a patriotic gathering, and it caught on instantly. By acclamation, the troops adopted it as the official marching song of the National Guard of Marseilles.
- On July 30, 1792, these troops marched through Paris singing what from that moment forward came to be known as “La Marseillaise.”
- Like French democracy itself, “La Marseillaise” had a rough ride. On July 14, 1795, it was decreed the French national anthem. But Napoleon didn’t like it; thus, when he declared himself emperor in 1804, it was replaced by a dull patriotic song called “Let’s Ensure the Salvation of the Empire.”
- “La Marseillaise” was banned outright between 1815 and 1830, during the Bourbon restoration monarchies of Louis XVIII and Charles X. It made a comeback in 1830 but fell out of favor again in 1851 when a coup d’état put Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte on the throne as Emperor Napoleon III.
- After Napoleon III’s downfall, “La Marseillaise” was adopted as the official anthem of the international revolutionary movement by the Paris Commune of 1871. Eight years later, it was once again declared the French national anthem and remains so to this day.

The Restoration

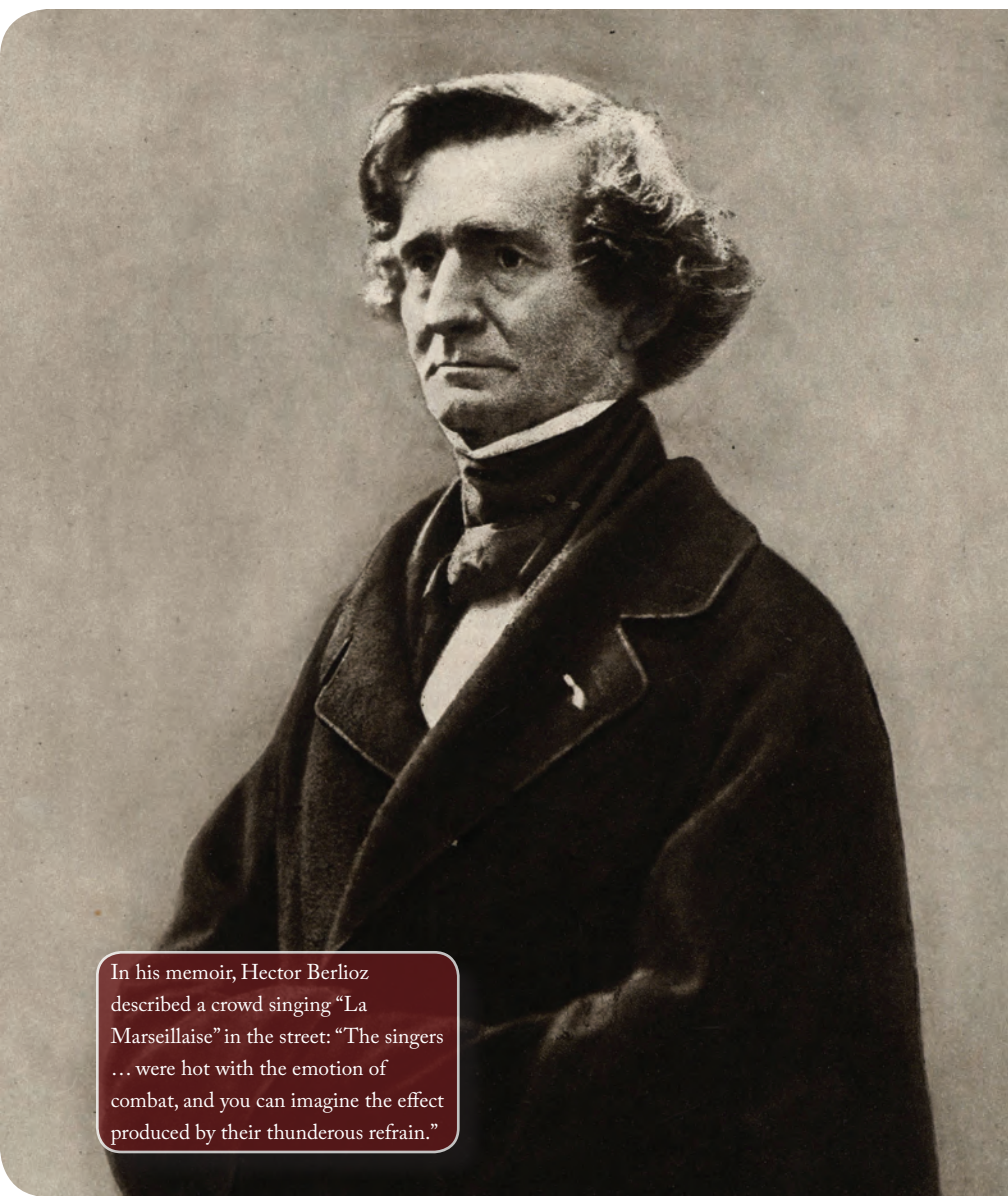
- On March 30, 1814, the victorious allies of the Sixth Coalition rode into Paris, intent on dismantling Napoleon’s “empire,” as well as the revolutionary movement that had spawned the Napoleonic age.
- Among the first orders of business was to restore the Bourbon family dynasty. The crown went to Louis XVI’s younger brother, who had lived in exile from 1791 to 1814. He was crowned Louis XVIII on April 11, 1814. With the exception of the 100 Days in 1815, during which Napoleon made his brief comeback, Louis XVIII ruled until 1824.

- The coalition that had defeated Napoleon had no intention of creating another strongman-style government in France. Thus, a constitution was drawn up called the Charter of 1814. A bicameral legislature was created, consisting of an elected Chamber of Deputies and a Chamber of Peers appointed by the king.
- Louis XVIII ruled at a difficult time, as long-suppressed royalists sought to avenge themselves against the revolutionaries and Bonapartist “traitors.” The king did his best to limit vendettas and bloodshed and issued a general amnesty in 1816. He was a centrist and a populist who was haunted by the fear of what would happen if (and when) he was succeeded by his ultra-royalist younger brother, Charles-Philippe, the count of Artois.
- Louis XVIII died on September 16, 1824, and was indeed succeeded by his brother, who reigned as Charles X. Like Louis XVIII, Charles X had spent the years from 1791 to 1814 in exile. But where Louis XVIII understood that France could never return to the absolutism of the *ancien regime*, Charles X intended to turn back the clock some 35 years.
- Of course, that was impossible, largely because any king of France after 1815 had the delicate task of reconciling the restoration with the revolution. The only way to do that was to acknowledge the events of the previous 35 years and govern from the center.
- Several policies alienated Charles X from the majority of the French population, including paying out huge indemnities to nobles whose property had been confiscated by the revolution, enacting an anti-sacrilege law that required the death penalty for any act of blasphemy committed in a church, and re-empowering the church establishment.
- In 1827, 1828, and 1829, when the voting public elected parliamentary majorities that did not align with his interests, Charles X fired the opposition prime ministers. Although the constitution legally entitled him to do these things, Charles X completely misjudged the temper of the French people, particularly the Parisians.

- It all came to a head when the king and his ministers suspended the constitution and then—on July 25, 1830—issued a number of anti-liberal measures. Called the Four Ordinances, they dissolved the newly elected Chamber of Deputies; imposed censorship on the press; took away the right to vote from bankers, merchants, and industrialists; and called for new elections based on the remaining aristocratic electorate.
- The Four Ordinances—delivered to a public that had already beheaded one king—were published in the official government newspaper. That evening, crowds gathered in and around the Palais-Royale and chanted “Down with the Bourbons!”

The Three Glorious Days

- On the morning of Tuesday, July 27, 1830, police fanned out across the city to shut down the newspapers. Mobs of working people, students, members of the middle class, former National Guardsmen, and army veterans stood shoulder to shoulder against the police and soldiers. The soldiers shot into the mobs. The mobs stormed barracks and police stations, “liberating” weapons and ammunition for their own use. Within hours, battle lines were drawn across the city.
- On the following day, the protesters barricaded the street, and increasing numbers of soldiers joined them. In the afternoon, Charles X received a message from his commander: “Sire, it is no longer a riot, it is a revolution. It is urgent for your majesty to take measures. The honor of the crown can still be saved. Tomorrow there will be no time.”
- By the next day, it was clear to Charles X that his time was up. Not wanting to become a sacrifice to a revolution, Charles went into exile. He died six years later, in 1836.
- One of the witnesses to the Three Glorious Days was Hector Berlioz. He was born on December 11, 1803, in the town of La Côte-Saint-André, near Grenoble in southwestern France.

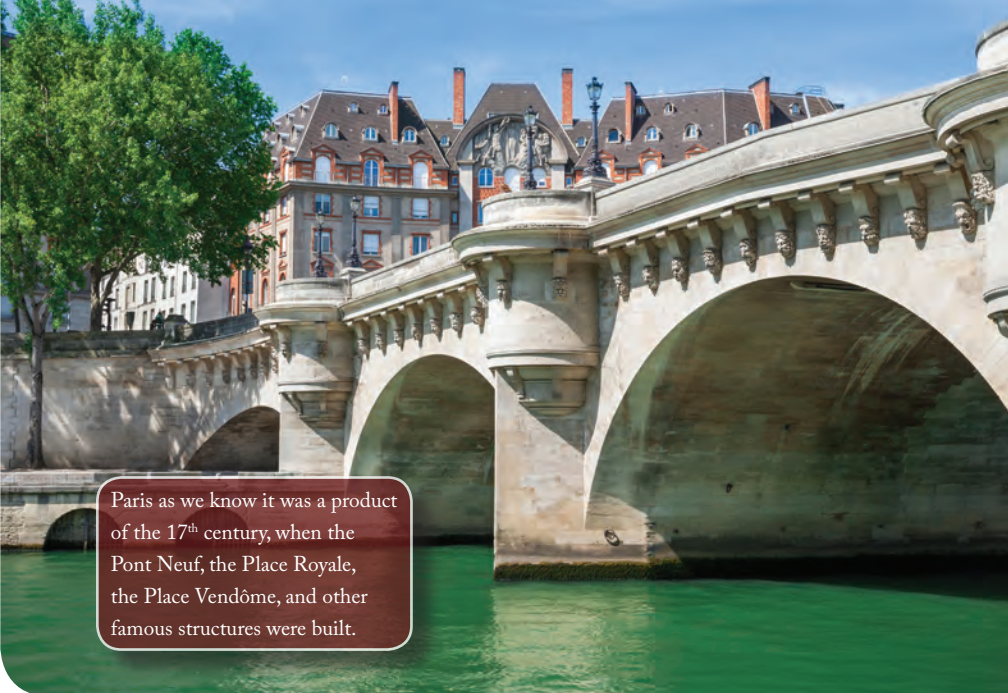


In his memoir, Hector Berlioz described a crowd singing “La Marseillaise” in the street: “The singers ... were hot with the emotion of combat, and you can imagine the effect produced by their thunderous refrain.”

- The son of a well-to-do country doctor, Berlioz was sent to Paris in September 1821 to study medicine, but he immediately dedicated himself to his great passion, music. He entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1826, at the age of 23.
- In his memoir, Berlioz described the spirit in Paris during the Three Glorious Days. He told of coming across an impromptu chorus singing patriotic songs. He joined them and as they sang, they attracted an ever larger and more boisterous crowd. Finally, the chorus began to sing the patriotic song that had once been the national anthem but had been banned during the Bourbon restoration: “La Marseillaise.”

The Parisian Mind

- Parisians are among the most ferociously independent, anti-authoritarian, cynical, irascible, and creative people on the planet. What other city on earth can boast of having hosted four revolutions, two coup d'états, and various smaller uprisings, to say nothing of three invasions and occupations in the span of 150 years, while still remaining the most beautiful city on earth?
- For Paris, the transition to modernity began in 1594, when Henry IV—the first Bourbon king—took up residence in the city. The French Wars of Religion, which had been waged for more than 30 years prior to Henry's arrival, had left the city in ruins.
- Henry brought peace to France in 1598 when he signed the Edict of Nantes, which made religious tolerance the law of the land. In 1601, he informed the Paris town council that he intended to make the city “beautiful and splendid.” He and his successors, Louis XIII and Louis XIV, did just that.
- Paris became a city of firsts: the first Western city with streets wide enough to accommodate large vehicles, coaches, and carriages; the first to institute a municipal postal system; the first to build sidewalks, institute mass public transit, and install street lighting.



Paris as we know it was a product of the 17th century, when the Pont Neuf, the Place Royale, the Place Vendôme, and other famous structures were built.

- New bridges, public squares, parks, lights, and boulevards pulled people from every walk of life out of their homes and onto the streets, where they mingled in a manner new to a Western city. Over the course of the 17th century, age-old social distinctions began to break down as an ever-broader range of Paris' population was empowered by the dynamic, ever-changing city around them.
- For the French government, this social leveling had a downside: The increasingly empowered, upwardly mobile Parisian population did not respond well to the autocracy when it came to their money.
 - When the ruinous Thirty Years' War ended in 1648, the French government was nearly bankrupt. Because King Louis XIV was just 9 years old, the government was being run by his mother, the queen regent Anne of Austria, and France's chief minister, the Italian-born Cardinal Jules Mazarin. In 1648, Mazarin raised taxes across the board.

- The nobility, claiming ancient privilege, simply refused to pay. Thus, the entire burden fell on the *bourgeoisie*, the new and increasingly wealthy middle class that was the driving force behind Paris' burgeoning economic engine. When the *bourgeoisie* refused to shoulder the entire burden of France's debt, a struggle broke out in Paris and spread across France. The incident was called the Fronde, a *fronde* being a sling, with which Parisian mobs hurled stones at the windows of Cardinal Mazarin's allies.
- When the dust finally settled in 1653, the monarchy was in control, but a new sort of civil war had been fought, one over money and national policy. For the Parisians, it was a harbinger of things to come. High government officials, members of the aristocracy, and even members of the royal family had been insulted and spat upon. Their homes had been vandalized; they had been chased through the streets and dragged from their carriages; they had been beaten, stoned, and even shot at by merchants and workers.
- By the early 18th century, Paris was a rapidly changing capital city: open, thriving, dynamic, hedonistic, fashion-crazed, and politically volatile—a socially mixed city characterized by economic opportunity, social advancement, and rapid information flow. Given the Parisian attitude toward authority, it's no wonder that the age of European revolutions began in Paris in 1789.

Ending the Summer of 1830

- In August 1830, inspired by a performance of “La Marseillaise” that he had heard at an opera, Berlioz turned out his own arrangement of the piece. Berlioz set all six verses of the hymn, each verse followed by the chorus, and scored the piece for a double-sized chorus, vocal soloists, a children's choir, and an orchestra with six trumpets and a large complement of percussion.
- The heady, revolutionary Parisian days of the summer of 1830 were, sadly, followed by disappointment and disillusionment. The monarchy of Louis-Philippe was—as it was said—a platform of

boards built over a volcano. Despite the king's attempt to rule as a constitutional monarch, there could be no real reconciliation between the revolution and the restoration. Louis-Philippe's 18-year reign was marked by three unsuccessful rebellions and seven assassination attempts against the king and his sons. He was overthrown by yet another revolution in 1848.

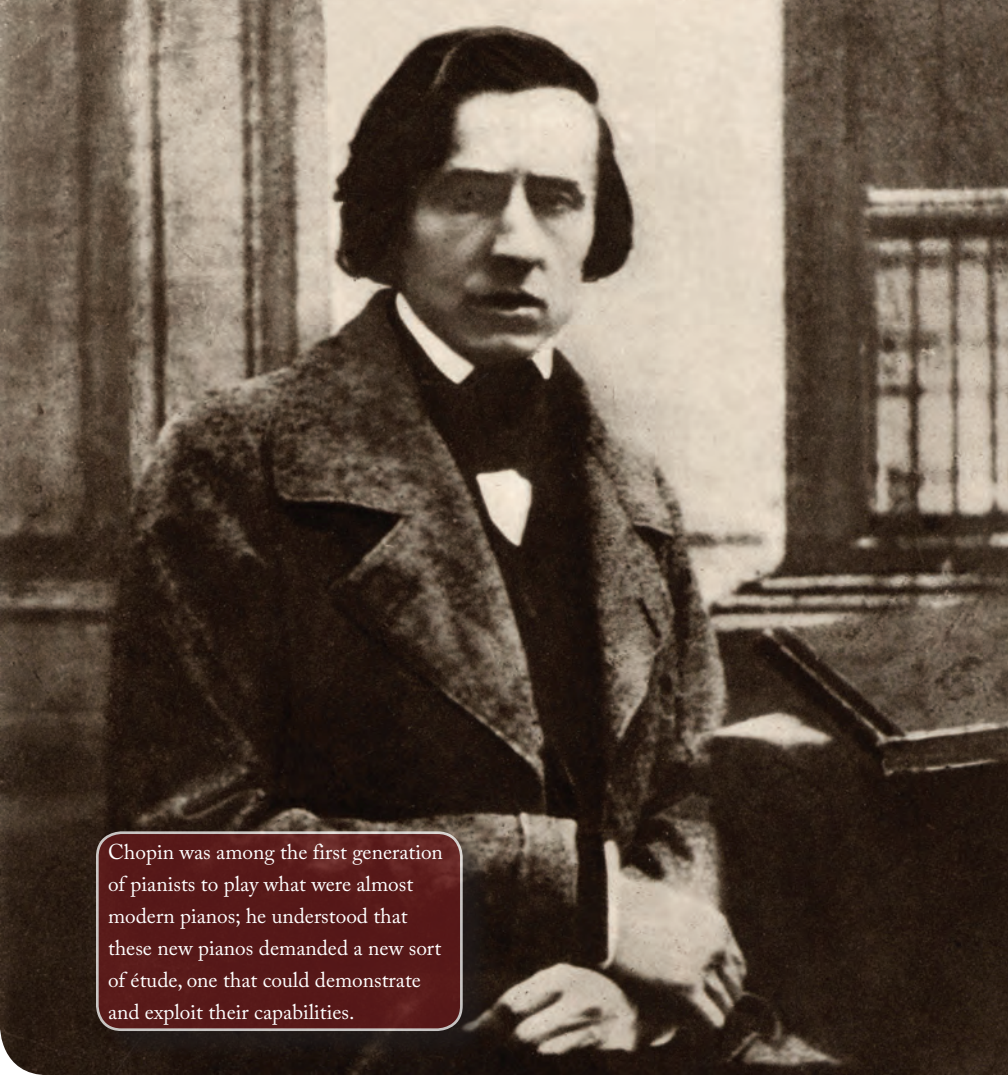
Chopin: Étude in C Minor, Op. 10, No. 12 (1831)

Lecture
8

Frédéric Chopin was not just one of the greatest composers who ever lived but one of the greatest pianists, as well. His greatness as a pianist was a function of something more than his faultless technique: It was a function of artistry. Chopin could make the piano sing in a way that no one before him had ever managed to do. He was a virtuoso, but his virtuosity—as both a pianist and as a composer of piano music—was always employed as a means to an end, rather than the end unto itself.

Chopin's Études

- An *étude* is a relatively short work designed around a particular technical challenge. Up to Chopin's time, études—particularly études for piano—were dry and repetitive, usually foisted on students to teach them technique.
- With his work, Chopin singlehandedly elevated the genre of piano étude into high art, blending expressive poetry and virtuosity into compact works of breathtaking beauty. Since their publication in the 1830s, Chopin's études have been celebrated primarily for their musical content, rather than their technical content.
- Altogether, Chopin composed 27 études for piano: the 12 études of op. 10, composed between 1829 and 1832; the 12 études of op. 25, composed between 1832 and 1836; and the Three New Études, composed in 1839.
- Consider the 12th étude of opus 10, set in the key of C minor and composed in 1831. This étude is a study for the left hand, which must



Chopin was among the first generation of pianists to play what were almost modern pianos; he understood that these new pianos demanded a new sort of *étude*, one that could demonstrate and exploit their capabilities.

play long, sweeping lines in almost continuous 16th notes. The *étude* runs more than two minutes and is cast in two large sections. The *bravura* (meaning “purposely virtuosic”) of the left-hand part clearly marks this piece as being a study. But it is also a powerful, violently expressive piece of music.

- This étude was inspired by a real-world event: the destruction of a Polish uprising and the capture of Warsaw by the Russians on September 8, 1831.
- Chopin—who grew up in Warsaw—had left his hometown at the age of 20, intent on achieving fame and fortune in Western Europe. On the road to Paris, Chopin was in Stuttgart in southwestern Germany when he heard the news of the Polish catastrophe. He was devastated.
- According to Chopin biographer Adam Zamoyski, the capture of Warsaw catalyzed Chopin: “The sense of loss sustained on that night in Stuttgart never left him. It came to embrace everything—home, country, family, friends, love and youth—and remained the fundamental inspiration for his music.”

The Partitioning of Poland

- There was a time when Poland was able to hold its own against its neighbors: Prussia (and, later, Germany) to the west and Russia to the east. Founded in 1569, the Kingdom of Poland—also known as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth—was one of the largest, most populous, and most powerful nations in 16th- and 17th-century Europe. With the first constitution in modern European history and an elected monarch, it was also one of the most socially advanced nations on earth.
- The early 17th century was the golden age of the Kingdom of Poland. Tragically, the Thirty Years’ War of 1618 to 1648 exacted a terrible toll on Poland and made it easy prey. In 1648, a Cossack rebellion in the southern portion of Poland (in what today is Ukraine) led to Russian occupation of those areas. In 1655, in what was known as the Great Deluge, Sweden invaded Poland from the north.
- It was Russia, though, that continued to eat away at the Polish Commonwealth until, in 1768, it became a protectorate of the Russian Empire. Presumably, a protectorate is still a sovereign state. But for Poland, that sham was revealed in 1772 when, for diplomatic reasons, it became advantageous to partition the Polish-Lithuanian

Commonwealth. Poland, already largely occupied by Russian troops, had no choice but to go along with its own dismantling.

- Two more partitions followed: one in 1793 and another in 1795. The second partition triggered an insurrection called the Kościuszko Uprising that was brutally crushed. Russia and Prussia, determined to eradicate the revolutionary spirit of the Poles, again partitioned Poland in 1795. As a result of this third partition, so much Polish territory had been sliced off that the commonwealth simply ceased to exist.
- In 1807, following Napoleon's victories at the battles of Jena, Austerlitz, and Friedland, Prussia ceded a great swath of what had once been part of the Kingdom of Poland to France under the terms of the Treaties of Tilsit. Napoleon fashioned these lands into a puppet state called the duchy of Warsaw, but it ceased to exist when the victorious allies once again partitioned Poland in 1815.
- In 1815, after Napoleon's defeat, the Congress of Vienna created something called Congress Poland. This was a smallish state, consisting roughly of what today is central Poland, with Warsaw as its capital. On paper at least, Congress Poland was a semi-autonomous state with a liberal constitution, a king, and a parliament of nobles (called the Sejm), which was tasked with creating laws.
- The problem, however, was that the new king of Poland was Alexander I, the emperor of Russia. Alexander had no intention of allowing a Polish bastion of liberty to exist on the western border of his autocracy; thus, he ignored the resolutions passed at the Congress of Vienna.
- Tsar Alexander I died on December 1, 1825, and was succeeded by his younger brother, Tsar Nicholas I, who outright refused to accept the Polish constitution. Instead, he championed a policy called Official Nationality, by which the Poles were "encouraged" to accept a Russian national identity, accept the autocratic rule of the tsar, and embrace Russian Orthodoxy over Polish Catholicism.

Chopin's Early Life

- Chopin was born on March 1, 1810, in a village about 29 miles west of Warsaw. His mother was a native Pole; his father, Nicolas Chopin, was French but became a zealous Polish nationalist. In July 1810, the Chopin family moved to Warsaw.
- The duchy of Warsaw—a Napoleonic puppet state—constantly aspired to re-create the glory days of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The majority of the citizens of the duchy were not happy about being ruled from Paris, and Polish conservatives and traditionalists in particular resented the authoritarian nature of Napoleonic rule.
- But the Napoleonic regime introduced a number of modern reforms to Polish society. For example, the Napoleonic Code forbade privileges based on birth and guaranteed legal equality. The liberalizing effects of the Napoleonic occupation caused many Poles to believe that with French help, they could restore pre-partition Poland and become, once again, a sovereign nation. To that end, nearly 100,000 Polish troops marched with Napoleon's *grande armée* into Russia in 1812.
- Sadly, very few of those 100,000 lived to see Poland again. Russia occupied the duchy in January 1813 as it advanced toward France. Polish national hopes were shattered, as they would be again in 1815, when the Congress of Vienna repartitioned Poland and turned most of what had been the duchy of Warsaw over to Russia.
- Frédéric Chopin left Warsaw on November 2, 1830. Joined by a friend, Chopin's first major stop was Vienna. There, the young men heard the heart-stopping news: On November 29, 1830, an armed rebellion had broken out in Warsaw against the Russians.

The November Uprising

- The November Uprising was, in fact, a 10-month-long insurrection that spread across partitioned Poland, Lithuania, western Belarus, and much of Ukraine. The trigger for this revolt was the restoration by

Louis Philippe—the new king of France after Charles X—of the French constitution and freedom of the press. These moves angered Tsar Nicholas I, who decided to invade France.

- For troops, Nicholas turned to Poland, but the Polish military had other ideas. After 15 years of Russian subjugation, suppression, and disrespect, this was the last straw. Instead of putting down the revolution in Paris, the Polish officer corps decided to emulate it.
- On November 29, 1830, a group of junior officers stationed in Warsaw launched the insurrection. They managed to seize the city arsenal and distributed 30,000 rifles among Warsaw's population. The Russian garrison fled the city, and more units of the Polish army joined the rebellion.
- The Sejm, which had been essentially outlawed in 1825, convened and endorsed the insurrection as “an act of the Nation.” On January 25, by acclamation, the Sejm deposed Tsar Nicholas I as king of Poland. In doing so, the Sejm broke with the Treaty of Vienna. The Poles claimed that they were justified in doing so because tsars Alexander I and Nicholas I had disregarded the terms of their constitution.
- The Poles might have rallied enough European support to revise the terms of the Treaty of Vienna had they been able to convince the Great Powers that their insurrection was a strictly Polish affair. But the Poles couldn't do that because of the revolutionary storm unleashed by the uprising. The insurrection spread to western Belarus and Ukraine, which compelled the Sejm—in an act of defiance of Russia—to incorporate those territories into the Polish state.
- With the annexation of parts of Russia, the insurrection ceased to be a strictly Polish issue and became, instead, an international crisis. Under these circumstances, and despite popular support for the Polish cause, France, England, Austria, and Prussia were unwilling to go against Russia—either diplomatically or militarily—on Poland's behalf.

As of May 1831, the Poles were left to slug it out with the Russian Empire on their own.

- The Poles had about 80,000 troops, and they initially acquitted themselves quite well. But Russia had unlimited men and materiel, and it was just a matter of time before the Poles were defeated. Warsaw fell on September 8, 1831, and the last Polish troops put down their arms on October 5.
- It was a stunning, disheartening defeat for the thousands of people around the world who had been pulling for the Poles. No one was more dismayed than Frédéric Chopin, who also feared for the safety of his family and friends in Warsaw. His diary entry at the time is the literary equivalent of the piece of music Chopin composed in response to the news from Warsaw: the *Étude in C Minor*, op. 10, no. 12. The unrelenting brutality of this *étude* marks it as unique among Chopin's work.

Chopin in Paris

- Chopin arrived in Paris in late September 1831, still seething over the events in Poland. To his relief, he learned that his parents and sisters were safe. Soon, exiles from Warsaw began to arrive in Paris.
- To the disappointment of many of his fellow émigrés, Chopin was not as politically committed to the great Polish cause as they would have hoped. Indeed, Chopin preferred the lifestyle of Paris. Many of his friends couldn't fathom why he didn't want to return to the motherland.
- The fact that Chopin didn't want to return to Poland or foment revolution did not make him any less of a patriot than his friends. On the contrary, Chopin's patriotism as a Pole was an idealized, mystical, even metaphysical thing, a thing that inspired him to musical, if not political, action. And as it turned out, it was Chopin's music that came to represent the hopes, dreams, and memories of the émigrés, as well as those of the people back home.

- Chopin's particular brand of musical nationalism was unique. Unlike other identifiably nationalist composers, Chopin did not use folkloric materials or evoke national imagery in his music. Rather, in the words of Zamoyski, "Chopin created a musical idiom that transcended music, an idiom that in many ways actually helped to mold and condition the [Polish] nation itself. That is why he is so central to the national narrative: He helped compose it."
- After settling in Paris in 1831, Chopin never returned to Poland. As for the Polish nation itself, its trials continued for another 158 years. Another failed uprising in 1863 and 1864 led Russia to annex Poland into the Russian Empire. In 1918, following the end of World War I, an independent, sovereign Polish state came back into existence for the first time in 146 years.
- But Poland's statehood was brief; it was again crushed and partitioned—by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union—in 1939, and it became one of the principal killing grounds of World War II. Partitioned yet again in 1945, Poland became a Soviet satellite and disappeared behind the Iron Curtain, only to emerge—finally—as an independent nation in 1989.

Glinka: *A Life for the Tsar* (1836)

Lecture
9

The action of Mikhail Glinka's opera *A Life for the Tsar* takes place in 1613, during a war between Russia and Poland. The struggle is depicted musically by setting those portions of the opera dominated by Russians with Russian folk-like music and those sections dominated by Poles with Polish dance music. The almost comic contrast between Russian gravitas and Polish foppishness belies the historical conflict between Russia and Poland as we understand it today. Keep in mind, however, that Russia wasn't always the aggressor; there was a time when Poland was the invader and occupier. The story behind Glinka's opera *A Life for the Tsar* is what has come to be known as Russia's time of troubles.

The Time of Troubles

- The Rurik dynasty (or Rurikids) was founded by a tribal chieftain named Rurik in about 862 C.E. The territory occupied by the Rurikids, consisting of what is today European Russia, was called Rus. The Rurik dynasty proved itself to be resourceful by confederating tribes and gobbling up territory over the next centuries.
- The first Russian leader of state to be officially designated tsar was the Rurik chieftain Ivan IV Vasilyevich, better known as Ivan the Terrible. The last of the Rurik tsars was Fyodor I, Ivan's son. He was born in Moscow in 1557, crowned in 1584 at the age of 27, and died in 1598, a few months shy of his 41st birthday. With the end of the Rurik dynasty, the time of troubles began.
- The literature has called Fyodor "a weak leader," "intellectually disabled," and "mentally deficient." Be that as it may, Fyodor was revered by the Russian people. He would not have become tsar had his

older brother, Ivan Ivanovich, lived. But unfortunately, their father—Ivan the Terrible—killed the 27-year-old heir apparent during an argument.

Dynastic Difficulties

- Two and a half years after Ivan Ivanovich's death, Fyodor was crowned tsar. It was obvious to everyone that Fyodor could not rule; thus, that job passed to a nobleman and senior government minister named Boris Godunov, who ruled as regent of Russia from 1585 until Fyodor's death in 1598. Fyodor was married to Boris's sister, Irina, who was unable to produce a male heir.
- A potential male heir to the throne was Fyodor's younger brother, Dmitri Ivanovich. However, Dmitri's mother, Maria Nagaya, was Ivan the Terrible's seventh wife. As a result, Dmitri was considered to be illegitimate, because canon law of Russian Orthodoxy permitted a maximum of three marriages. But if Fyodor was to die without having produced a male heir, it was possible that young Dmitri could receive a dispensation from the church and be allowed to succeed his brother.
- Boris Godunov—as Tsar Fyodor's regent—no doubt felt threatened by the existence of Dmitri and his mother. Thus, Godunov had them banished to the remote town of Uglich, about 130 miles north of Moscow.
- On May 15, 1591, the 8-year-old Dmitri's body was discovered lying in a pool of blood in a courtyard. His throat had been slit. A commission sent from Moscow determined that Dmitri's death was an accident: He cut his own throat during an epileptic seizure. With Dmitri out of the way, Boris was next in line for the crown.

Beginning of the Bad Times

- When Tsar Fyodor died of natural causes on January 7, 1598, Boris Godunov became tsar, bringing an end to the Rurik dynasty that had ruled for 736 years. In the 15 years between the end of the Rurik

dynasty and the establishment of the Romanov dynasty, almost everything in Russia fell apart.

- On February 19, 1600, the Huaynaputina volcano in Peru erupted, throwing between 16 and 32 million tons of particulate matter into the atmosphere. The global impact was catastrophic. In Russia, 1601 went down as the coldest year in six centuries. Between 1601 and 1603, Russia suffered a famine that killed one-third of its population. Tsar Boris was blamed for this cataclysmic event, because he was increasingly perceived as a usurper who had inspired God's wrath.
- Lying immediately to the west of Russia was the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, a large, multinational entity. Factions in the commonwealth saw Russia's problems as an opportunity to march into Russia under the guise of rescuing a neighbor in chaos.
- The pretext for this invasion was the miraculous appearance of someone claiming to be the presumably dead Tsarevich Dmitri. Whether or not anyone really believed this man to be Dmitri was immaterial. What mattered was that he was *not* Boris, and many in Russia and Poland found reason to suspend their disbelief and accept the false Dmitri as a gift from God.
- In June 1605, an army financed by Polish nobles marched into Russia. Thus began a series of wars known as the Dmitriads ("Dmitri Wars"). Early Polish success was followed by devastating defeat, and it looked as if the invasion would come to an end. But then, Boris Godunov died unexpectedly. He was succeeded by his 16-year-old son, Fyodor II.
- When word got out that Godunov had died, Russian troops began defecting to Dmitri's side. The *boyars* (aristocrats) in Moscow saw exactly which way the wind was blowing, and on June 11, 1605, they arrested Fyodor and his mother. Nine days later—as the false Dmitri triumphantly rode into Moscow—both Fyodor and his mother were murdered.

- This first false Dmitri—who was crowned tsar on June 21, 1605—did not last long. A plot against him was engineered by a Russian prince just 11 months after Dmitri's triumphant entrance into Moscow, and he was shot dead.

Continuing Troubles

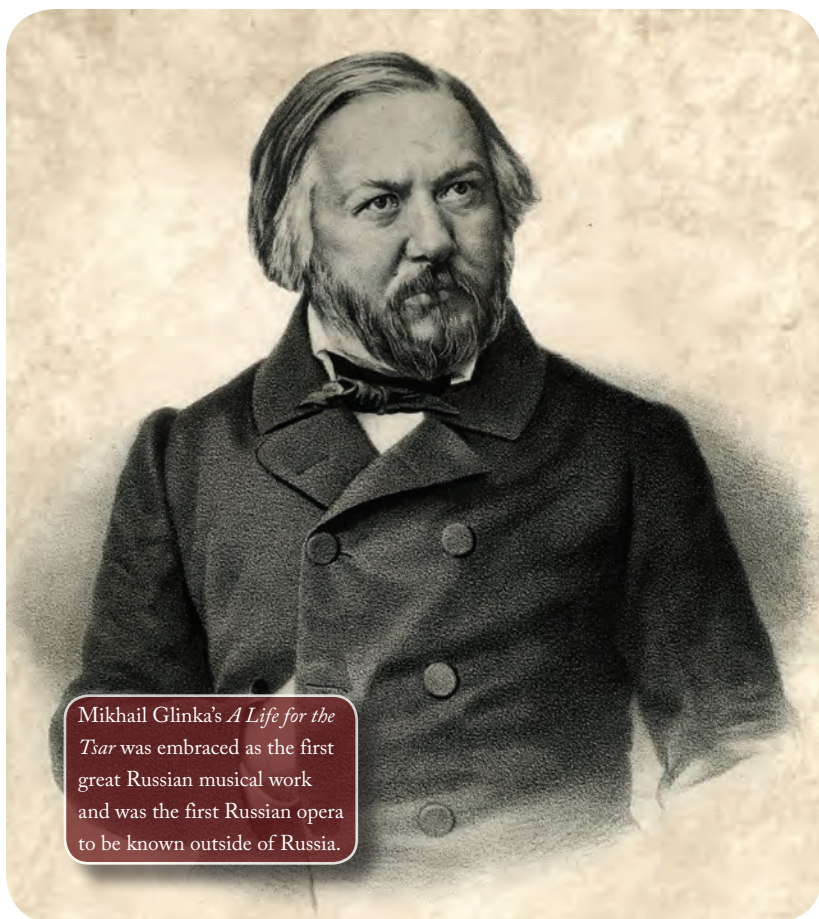
- Prince Vasily Shiusky, who had organized the assassination of the false Dmitri, became the next tsar. He lasted only four years. Meanwhile, over the course of the next seven years, two more false Dmitris would appear; significant parts of Russia, including Moscow and Smolensk, would be occupied by Polish troops; the king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Sigismund III, declared himself to be tsar; civil wars raged throughout Russia; and a number of other tragedies took place.
- Thus, it was nothing short of a national rebirth when Dmitri Pozharsky, a Rurikid prince, and Kuzma Minin, a Russian merchant, led a volunteer army to liberate Moscow in September 1612. The Polish garrison barricaded themselves in the Kremlin. Having been promised humane treatment and safe passage to Poland, the starving garrison surrendered two months later. The Russians then slaughtered the Poles.
- On February 21, 1613, three months after the slaughter, a National Assembly elected the 16-year-old Mikhail Romanov tsar of Russia. It then took three days to track Mikhail down. When he was informed that he'd been elected tsar, he reportedly burst into tears, no doubt aware of the short shelf life of recent Russian autocrats.
- Mikhail was a gentle and pious man, much beloved by his people. He ruled well for 32 years, until his death at age 49 in 1645. His reign saw an end to the time of troubles and the dynastic issues that had so much to do with them. Romanov tsars ruled for 304 years, until the abdication of Nicholas II in 1917.

Ivan Susanin

- According to legend, the Romanov dynasty almost didn't happen. Despite the defeat in Moscow, there were still Polish detachments in the countryside around Moscow. One of these detachments got word that a search was on for the newly elected tsar—Mikhail Romanov—who was said to be holed up at the Ipatiev Monastery near Kostroma.
 - In the woods near the monastery, a Polish search party encountered a logger named Ivan Susanin, who promised to take them to the monastery.
 - Deep into the woods they went, and there, they disappeared, never to be heard from again. It was assumed that the Poles killed Ivan once they discovered that he had no intention of taking them to the monastery and that they themselves froze to death trying to find their way back out.
- There is strong evidence that this legend is, in fact, true. In 1619, a resident of a village near Kostroma named Bogdan Sobinin was given one-half of a village named Derevischi by Tsar Mikhail himself. According to the royal charter, the lands were granted as a reward for the heroic actions of his father-in-law, Ivan Susanin, for refusing to reveal the tsar's whereabouts to the Poles.

Glinka and the Cultural Quest for “Russia”

- Mikhail Glinka was born in 1804 to a wealthy, highly cultured, land-owning family. As a child, he studied piano and violin and received a first-rate education, after which he took a position as assistant secretary of the Department of Public Highways.
- In his mid-20s, Glinka decided that he wanted to be a real composer. He went to Italy for three years (including a stay at the Milan Conservatory), followed by a year of study in Berlin. When he returned to St. Petersburg in 1834, he was determined to compose an opera that would be recognizably, authentically Russian.



- On his return to St. Petersburg, Glinka got involved in a high-end salon run by the imperial court poet Vasily Andreyevich Zhukovsky, a major player at court. When Glinka mentioned that he wanted to write a Russian opera, Zhukovsky suggested a subject: Ivan Susanin.
- The story of Ivan resonated with Glinka for two reasons: First, it was about Ivan's unswerving willingness to sacrifice everything for his tsar,

who was the embodiment of the Russian state. Second, it was about fighting off foreign invaders.

- *A Life for the Tsar* received its premiere in St. Petersburg at the Bolshoi Theater on November 27, 1836, with the imperial family in attendance. It was a triumph—both for Glinka and for Russian art and culture.

A Life for the Tsar

- Glinka's *A Life for the Tsar* was considered by his contemporaries to be the first real Russian opera for four reasons.
- First, rather than use Russian folk songs or folk-like music here and there to create color, the entire opera breathes with a sensibility of Russian song and Polish dance.
- Second, Glinka created a style of text setting that reflected the idiosyncratic sounds and rhythms of the Russian language.
- Third, in *A Life for the Tsar*, Glinka created a full-fledged, full-length, fully up-to-date, cosmopolitan opera product that is fully sung and features orchestrally accompanied recitatives, virtuoso arias, multi-part ensembles, and blockbuster finales. It is also harmonically complex and exploits its orchestra to rich effect. An example is provided by a brief aria—an *arietta*—called “Vanya’s Song.” The words of the *arietta* have a folk-like quality, and it is—melodically and harmonically—a fully modern piece of operatic music.
- Finally, *A Life for the Tsar* resonated perfectly with the propagandistic intentions of the tsarist regime. As a nationalist story, it spoke to the pride and patriotism of the working and middle classes. The ruling class loved it, as well, because *A Life for the Tsar* reaffirmed the status quo: the Russian people’s absolute submission to Russia’s absolute autocracy.

Hammer and Sickle

- Soviet ideologues had a problem with an opera entitled *A Life for the Tsar*, but not as big a problem as we might think. In 1924, an altered version of the opera was produced under the title *Hammer and Sickle*; it flopped and was put on the shelf. The opera was again revived in 1939 with a new libretto.
- An example of this altered, Soviet-era libretto is the famous choral “Hymn of the Masses” that concludes the opera. In its original version, the first four lines of this hymn (written by Vasily Zhukovsky) are as follows:

Glory, glory to thee our Russian Tsar,
Our sovereign given to us by God!
May thy royal line be immortal!
May the Russian people prosper through it!

The new, sanitized Soviet words (written by Sergey Gorodetsky) read:

Glory, glory to thee, O Russia mine!
Glory to thee our Russian land!
May our beloved, our native land
Be strong throughout all ages!

- In 1991, with the demise of the Soviet Union, Glinka’s *A Life for the Tsar* was performed in Russia for the first time in 76 years. The production, by the Bolshoi Opera, was a triumph and was filmed for posterity.

Strauss Sr.: *Radetzky March* (1848)

Lecture
10

The Viennese self-image is one of empire; untold wealth and power; and military strength, tradition, and pomp. Of course, this is all nostalgia for an empire long gone. Austria's capital—Vienna—is, today, a wonderful city, but it is no longer the fast-paced, cutting-edge metropolis it once was. Vienna is a “museum city,” like Prague, Florence, and Venice; one visits Vienna to experience the glories of its past, not its present. The story behind Johann Strauss's *Radetzky March* is one of national pride, military success, and empire in the face of revolution and its own obsolescence. The big history behind this lecture is how the events that inspired the *Radetzky March* marked the last gasp of an ancient empire.

The Habsburg Empire

- In 768 C.E., the approximately 25-year-old Charles I was crowned king of the Frankish kingdom, a territory that included what today is France and much of Germany and Belgium. Within 20 years, Charles I—who came to be known as Charlemagne—had added, through conquest, most of Italy, Saxony, Bavaria, and Carinthia (in modern Austria) to his kingdom. In doing so, Charlemagne managed to unite most of Western Europe for the first time since the fall of the Roman Empire, roughly 400 years before.
- On Christmas Day, 800 C.E., Pope Leo III crowned Charles as Roman emperor at old St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. This Holy Roman Emperorship remained a hereditary title until 1356, when the so-called Golden Bull was issued by the imperial diet—the general assembly—of the Imperial Estates of the Holy Roman Empire. The Golden Bull detailed the process by which the Holy Roman Emperorship would subsequently become an elected office.



Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman Emperor, was a staunch friend of the papacy and brought Christianity to the lands he conquered.

- In 1452, the 37-year-old Frederick, archduke of Austria, was elected Holy Roman Emperor. His family name was Habsburg. Through savvy politics and bribes, the Habsburg clan managed to get themselves reelected to the Holy Roman Emperorship almost continuously from 1452 to 1806, which is when the Holy Roman Empire ceased to exist. Thus, for more than 350 years, the Austrian Habsburg emperor was also the Holy Roman Emperor.
- The high-water mark of the Habsburg Empire occurred between 1519 and 1556, during the reign of Emperor Charles V, the most powerful European ruler of his day.
 - From his maternal grandparents—Ferdinand and Isabella—Charles had inherited Castile, Aragon, various Italian and Mediterranean possessions, and the Spanish colonies in the Americas.
 - From his paternal grandparents, Charles inherited Austria, the Netherlands, and the Free County of Burgundy.
 - Add to all this the Holy Roman Empire (Germania), which he acquired at the age of 19 when he was elected Holy Roman Emperor.
- These were the glory days of the Habsburgs. But time and events conspired to shred their territory and reduce their influence. The Protestant Reformation, the Wars of Religion, and the Thirty Years' War were such events. Spain ceased to be ruled by the Habsburgs in 1700, and Habsburg influence over the German states began its decline with the rise of Prussia in the mid-18th century. As we saw in earlier lectures, Habsburg Austria was hammered by Napoleon, but ultimately, it was able to share the glory when Napoleon was defeated for good in 1815.

The Congress of Vienna

- The Congress of Vienna was a conference held in Vienna between September 1814 and June 1815. Chaired by the Austrian foreign minister Klemens von Metternich, the purpose of the Congress was to break up Napoleon's empire and distribute it among the victorious

powers in such a way as to create a balance of power that would ensure European peace.

- The congress also had another mission: to stamp out the liberalism, populism, and republicanism that had led to the French Revolution and Bonapartism. For all its good intentions regarding peace, the Congress was reactionary, and in trying to turn back the clock, it doomed the 19th century to an endless series of revolutionary conflicts and the 20th century to world war.
- One modern diplomat who would disagree with that statement is Henry Kissinger; his doctoral dissertation, entitled *A World Restored* and written in 1954, claims that the congress prevented another pan-European war for 100 years, until 1914.
 - We might argue, however, that that war lasted for 77 years—until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991—and included World War I, the Russian Revolution and civil war, the catastrophe that was Bolshevism, World War II, the Chinese Revolution, the Cold War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and many other conflicts.
 - We might further argue that that 77 years of war might never have occurred had national aspirations and logical borders been recognized by the men who redrew Europe's borders in 1815. But the only things they had learned from the American and French revolutions was that liberalism, republicanism, and populism had to be nipped in the bud and that repression was a government's best tool.
 - As it turned out, however, the desire for national self-determination cannot be beaten out of populations, no matter how repressive the government. A case in point is the Austrian Empire.
- At the time of the Congress of Vienna, the Austrian emperor was Francis I. As a ruling monarch who had witnessed the French Revolution and had suffered repeated military humiliation at the hands of the French, Francis came to despise political populism. In this, he was joined by Klemens von Metternich, who became chancellor of Austria in 1821 and, thus, the head of the Austrian government.

- Along with the constant demand of balancing Austrian strategy and policy with those of the other Great Powers—France, Britain, Prussia, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire—Metternich’s greatest concern was dealing with the never-ending issues of national identity in the empire.
- In a letter dated January 26, 1830, Metternich presciently wrote: “When Paris sneezes, Europe catches cold.” Six months later, Paris sneezed when, during the July Revolution, King Charles X was deposed and replaced by his more liberal cousin, Louis-Philippe, duke of Orléans.
- In 1830, Europe—in particular, the Austrian Habsburg Empire—caught a cold: Rumblings in Hungary were followed by outright rebellions in Belgium, Poland, and Austrian-occupied northern Italy. The rumblings were silenced, and the rebellions were smashed, but the nationalist impulses behind them simmered just below the boiling point.

The Year of Revolution: 1848

- Politically, the July Revolution of 1830 had come to nothing. The new king, Louis-Philippe, had begun his reign as a liberal but had become increasingly autocratic as time went on. By 1848, political meetings had been banned, press censorship was back, only 1 in every 30 French males had the right to vote, and a serious economic downturn that began in 1846 showed no signs of letting up.
- On February 21, 1848, as a way of circumventing the proscription against public meetings, a great banquet had been planned in Paris by the opposition. Such banquets were banned by King Louis-Philippe on February 21.
- The next day, the Parisian working class, helped by students and petty *bourgeoisie*, pulled up Paris’s paving stones and once again barricaded the streets. Troops shot into crowds that then became rioting mobs.
- Anarchy reigned for three days. On February 24, the 74-year-old King Louis-Philippe abdicated and snuck out of Paris in disguise. On

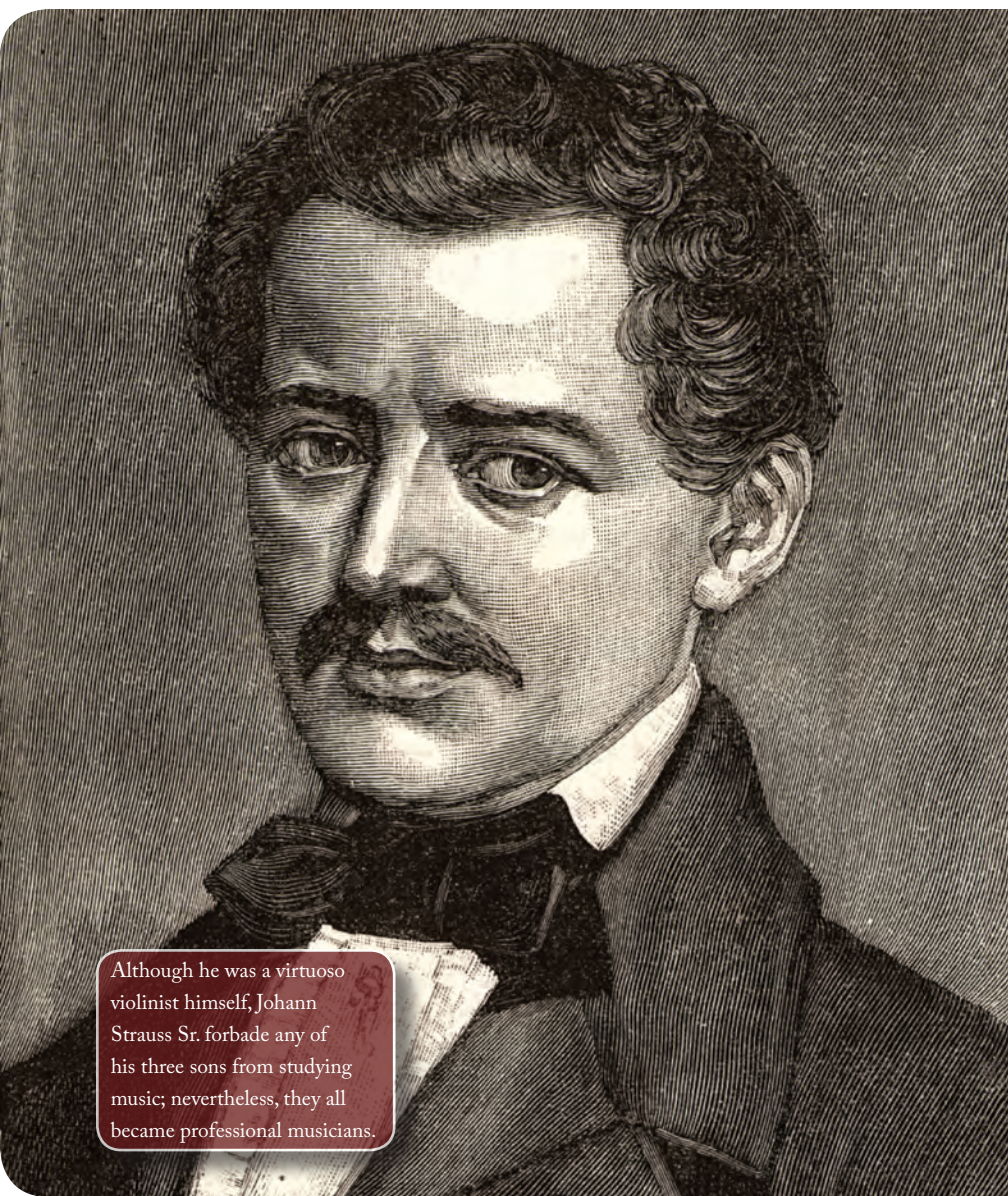
February 26, the French Second Republic was declared. This Second Republic would last for only three years, but no one knew that at the time. Word of this most recent French revolutionary “sneeze” spread throughout Europe.

- The infection first struck the Austrian Empire in Hungary. On March 3, 1848, inspired by the events in Paris, the Hungarian nationalist radical Lajos (or Louis) Kossuth gave an impassioned speech on the virtues of liberty and called for a constitution.
- The speech was translated into German and immediately sent to Vienna. There, on March 13, 1848, working people and students pulled up paving stones and barricaded the streets. Troops from the city garrison fired on the crowds, which fought back and stormed the imperial palace. Terrified, Klemens von Metternich fled Vienna.
- The Habsburg Empire fell to pieces along national lines. Hungary and Bohemia demanded—and were promised—constitutional separatism from Vienna. The duchy of Milan drove out its Austrian garrison, and Tuscany and Venice each declared themselves independent republics. Troops from all over Italy streamed north, intent on removing the Austrians from Italy for good.
- Every one of these uprisings was destroyed within 18 months.
 - The first insurrection to be broken was the one in Bohemia. In June 1848, troops under the command of Austrian General Alfred Candidus Ferdinand bombarded and marched into Prague. The revolutionaries were no match for professional soldiers.
 - The campaign in northern Italy was entrusted to the 82-year-old field marshal Joseph Wenzel, Count Radetzky von Radetz. Radetzky faced a full-blown national war of independence, but he led a brilliant campaign. The campaign ended on August 30, 1849, when Radetzky made his triumphal entry into the just-defeated city of Venice.
 - In Radetzky, the conservative elements of the Austrian Empire had a genuine hero. His death in 1858 at the age of 91 provoked an outpouring of grief throughout the empire. But for all his exploits,

honors, titles, and memorials, we remember him because of Johann Strauss Sr.'s *Radetzky March*.

Johann Strauss Sr.

- Johann Strauss Sr. was born in Vienna in 1804. An apprentice bookbinder, he pursued his true passion—practicing the violin—at night. But Strauss's bookbinding career went on permanent hold once he began playing in local dance bands. Along the way, he began writing his own dances, organized his own orchestra, starting touring, and made himself famous.
- In July 1825, the 21-year-old Strauss married the 23-year-old Maria Anna Streim. Three months later, on October 25, Maria Anna gave birth to a son, who was named after his father. By 1844, it had become clear that the 19-year-old Strauss Jr. would outstrip his father as a composer.
- The ugliness between Strauss father and son came to a head in 1848. Johann Jr. and his brothers were in complete sympathy with the revolutionaries. Johann Jr. was even appointed first conductor of the newly created revolutionary National Guard Orchestra. Johann Jr. composed music for the orchestra, as well, including "Revolutionary March," "Songs of Freedom," and "Songs of the Barracks."
- For his part, Johann Sr. was utterly disgusted with his son's politics. He was of the older generation: a man of the status quo, a political conservative, and an entertainment industry big shot whose lightweight dance music required quiet, happy times to be consumed and enjoyed.
- Nevertheless, 1848 was a year of inspiration for Strauss Sr., as well, though it wasn't the revolution that inspired him but, rather, Austria's military success on the antirevolutionary battlefield.



Although he was a virtuoso violinist himself, Johann Strauss Sr. forbade any of his three sons from studying music; nevertheless, they all became professional musicians.

- On July 24 and 25 of 1848, imperial Habsburg troops led by Count Radetzky routed the Italian forces at Custoza in north-central Italy. To mark this decisive victory, the imperial government produced—on August 31—a victory festival.
- Strauss Sr. was commissioned to compose a new work for the celebration, and he obliged with the *Radetzky March*. Reputed to have been composed in just two hours, the march incorporates a popular Viennese folk song entitled “The Old Dance of Vienna.” The folk tune is a waltz, set—by definition—in triple meter.
 - This tune—compressed to duple, or march, meter—became the central B section of Strauss’s march.
 - The inclusion of a tune that was then popular with the soldiers of the imperial Habsburg army was calculated to make the march instantly memorable, which it did.
- The politics of 1848 was the last straw for the relationship between Strauss Sr. and Jr. The elder Strauss died of scarlet fever on September 25, 1849, at the age of 45.
- Meanwhile, the problems in Vienna didn’t end until October 1848, when the army was finally called in to remove the revolutionaries permanently. Scores were arrested, and those deemed to be the leaders were shot.
- More a celebration than a march, the *Radetzky March* has lost its political and military connotations. But the march is still a work of its time: a time when the proud and ancient Habsburg Empire managed its last great imperial gasp before its downward slide to extinction in 1918.

Brahms: Piano Quartet in G Minor, Op. 25 (1861)

Lecture 11

This lecture is about two very different men brought together by a revolution. The two men are Johannes Brahms and Eduard Reményi. Both were world-class musicians, though their careers could not have been more different. Brahms spent the bulk of his career as a Vienna-based composer, while Reményi was an itinerant violin virtuoso. The revolution that brought them together took place in Hungary in 1848 and 1849. The story behind this lecture is just how this revolution brought Brahms and Reményi together and the life-changing, career-making impact their meeting had on Brahms.

The Kingdom of Hungary

- Between its creation in 1000 C.E. and its dismemberment in 1920 following World War I, the Kingdom of Hungary grew to become a large, multi-ethnic Central European state, consisting of territories that today are part of Hungary, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.
- The golden age of the Kingdom of Hungary existed between 1458 and 1490, during the reign of King Matthias Corvinus. What made Matthias's reign golden was that, through astute diplomacy and occasional military action, he managed to keep his kingdom's more predatory neighbors at bay: the Holy Roman Empire to the west and the Ottoman Empire to the south.
- Matthias died in 1490 without leaving an heir. After his death, power struggles between Hungary's elite weakened the kingdom. In 1526, an Ottoman army under the command of Suleiman invaded Hungary.

On August 26, 1526, Suleiman's army met the Hungarian army at the Battle of Mohács in what today is southern Hungary. The Hungarians were routed, and their army was destroyed.

- The Battle of Mohács marked a turning point not just for Hungary but also for Europe. The Kingdom of Hungary ceased to be an independent entity and was broken into three pieces.
 - In the north and west, the remaining Hungarian nobles accepted the rule of an Austrian Habsburg emperor named Ferdinand I. The southern area became Ottoman Hungary, while the far eastern edge became an Ottoman satellite called the Eastern Hungarian Kingdom.
 - For the next 150 years, the territories of the former Hungarian kingdom were a perpetual battlefield, the blood lands where two great empires and their religions—the Christian Habsburgs and the Muslim Ottomans—fought it out in nearly constant warfare.
- The tide turned in 1683, when the Ottoman invasion of Austria got to the walls of Vienna but no further. Sixteen years later—in 1699—the Ottomans signed the Treaty of Karlowitz, relinquishing any claims to Hungarian lands to the victorious Austrian Habsburgs.
- Austria immediately became the “big dog” in the Hungarian neighborhood. And having spilled no small amount of Habsburg blood and fortune to liberate Hungary, Austria was not inclined to turn the rule of Hungary back over to the Hungarians.
- Thus began a long and tendentious relationship between the Hungarians and their Austrian overlords. In 1791, Hungary was declared by Austria to be—“technically”—a separate country, with its own diet and a king crowned according to Hungarian law. The hitch was that the Hungarian king also happened to be the Austrian emperor and that only the king could call a meeting of the Hungarian diet.
- The defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1815 triggered an increasing radicalization of the Hungarian lesser nobility, the merchant class, and the intelligentsia. These people did not want to see a return to the

oppressive, pre-Napoleonic, Austrian-run status quo. The Hungarians, like many vassal people across the continent, wanted autonomy.

- In 1825, the degree of unrest in Hungary was such that the Habsburg emperor, Francis, called a meeting of the Hungarian diet—the first such meeting in 14 years—in order to allow the Hungarians to blow off some steam. That, however, was a miscalculation.
- Calls for reform echoed through the chamber. Demands were made that Austria remove itself from Hungary's national affairs and economy. Proposals were put forth for the creation of a Hungarian national academy of arts and sciences, the abolition of serfdom, the establishment of a Hungarian national bank, and more.
- The high Hungarian nobility were unhappy with these demands, largely because their wealth and influence were dependent on the Austrians. Thus, along with a confrontation with Austria, the potential for class warfare in Hungary grew dangerously in the early 1830s.

Lajos Kossuth

- Around this time, a charismatic figure, Lajos Kossuth, emerged in Hungary. For the magnates inside Hungary and the Hapsburg establishment, Kossuth was the son of Satan. Almost everyone else, however, recognized him as the George Washington of the nascent Hungarian nation.
- Kossuth was born in 1802 in Monok, in the northeastern corner of modern Hungary. He was the eldest of four children in a family of the lower nobility. He died in exile in 1894 in the northern Italian city of Turin.
- The son of a lawyer, Kossuth studied law and joined his father's legal practice at the age of 19. In 1825, at age 23, he was appointed a deputy to the Hungarian diet when it was convened by the Austrian emperor Francis. Kossuth's job was to write accounts of the happenings at the diet, intended only for the eyes of a few magnates.

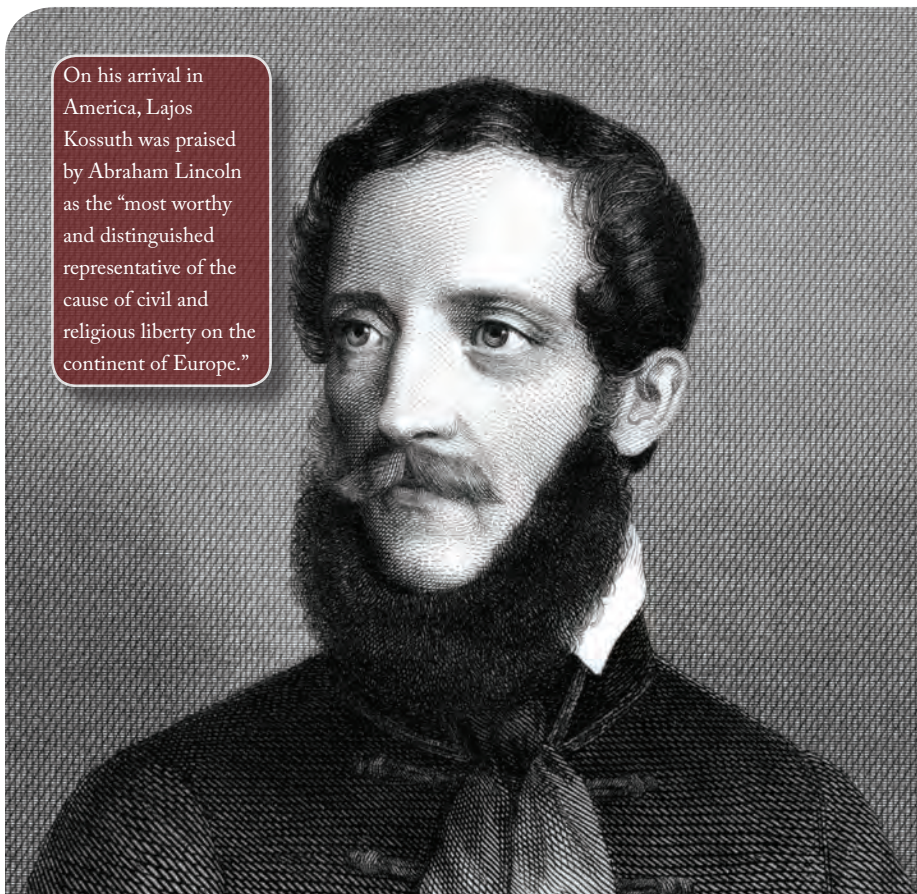
- Owing to their quality, however, Kossuth's accounts leaked out; they were circulated by hand until Kossuth—emboldened by the public response—began to publish a “parliamentary gazette”—a newsletter. The Austrian censor shut it down. Kossuth, his bully pulpit growing by the day, demanded that freedom of the press and of speech be legalized, not just in Hungary but everywhere in the Habsburg Empire.
- In May 1837, Kossuth was arrested, charged with high treason, and thrown into jail, where he spent the next three years. With this act, the Austrians created a martyr to the Hungarian national cause, and on his release from jail, Kossuth became a national hero. The government had no choice but to grant him a license to publish a newspaper, which became fantastically popular. Kossuth advocated for a liberal nationalist state in which Hungarian was the official language; he advocated for property rights and demanded economic and tax reform; and he broached the subject of Hungarian independence.
- In 1844, the government had had enough. Kossuth was fired from his own newspaper. But in the fall of 1847, he was elected to the newly called diet as a representative for Pest, the Hungarian capital city.
- A few months later—in February of 1848—the Parisians removed King Louis-Philippe and declared France a republic. On March 3, 1848, Kossuth mounted the rostrum at the diet and gave the speech of his lifetime, demanding a true parliamentary government for Hungary and constitutional government throughout the Habsburg Empire. He instantly became the rallying figure for revolution across Europe.

Revolution in Hungary

- A new government was declared in Hungary, with Kossuth appointed as minister of finance. But within a few months, it became clear that the revolution was not over. The Austrian military was intact, and Hungary would have to fight for its freedom. On July 11, the new Hungarian government issued a call to arms and quickly raised an army of 200,000 men.

- In the end, it wasn't enough. No country in Western Europe was willing to intervene on Hungary's behalf, while Russia came to Austria's aid. The end came when the Hungarian army—under the command of General Artúr Görgey—surrendered to the Russians, who promptly turned the Hungarian prisoners over to the Austrians. At Russia's insistence, General Görgey was spared, but 13 Hungarian generals were hanged by the Austrians as criminals on October 6, 1849.
- Thousands of Hungarian refugees—military officers, lesser nobles, writers, journalists, politicians, artists, and intellectuals—fled to points west. Among them was Lajos Kossuth. After a period of time in England, Kossuth arrived in New York on December 5, 1852, where he was welcomed as a hero.

On his arrival in America, Lajos Kossuth was praised by Abraham Lincoln as the “most worthy and distinguished representative of the cause of civil and religious liberty on the continent of Europe.”

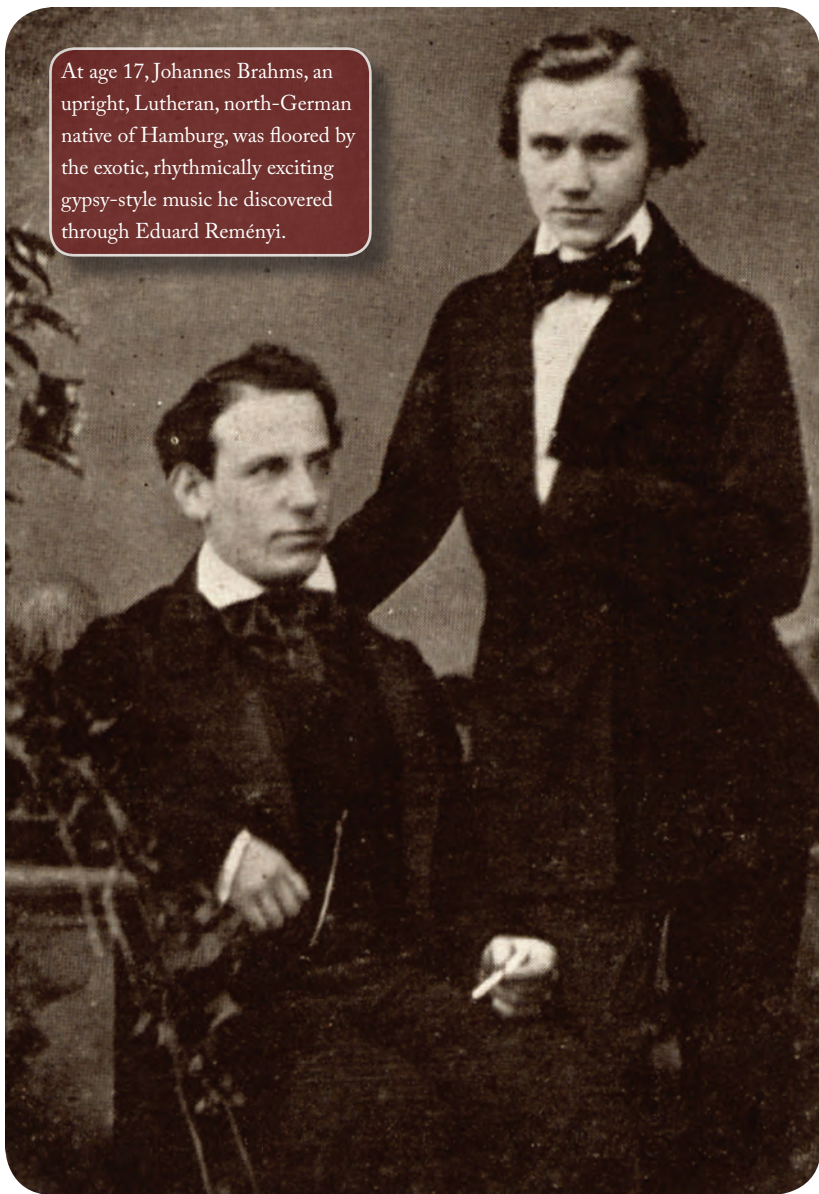


- Among the many who fled Hungary in 1849 was a 21-year-old violinist whose birth name was Eduard Hoffmann.
- He had been born in 1828 to a Jewish family in northeastern Hungary. He studied at the Vienna Conservatory from 1842 to 1845. On returning home, he got involved in nationalist politics and renamed himself Eduard Reményi.
- Already famous as a violinist, Reményi joined the revolutionary Hungarian army in 1848 and became an aide-de-camp to General Görgey. After the surrender, with a price on his head, Reményi fled Hungary.

Brahms and Reményi

- In August of 1850, the 17-year-old Johannes Brahms, who knew Reményi by reputation, met him in Hamburg when he accompanied the violinist at a private concert in the home of a local merchant.
- Brahms then continued to perform with Reményi and, through him, became involved with the Hungarian expatriate community. But most importantly, it was thanks to Reményi that Brahms heard and performed the songs and dances that made up the *alla zingarese*—“in the gypsy style”—repertoire. Thus began a love affair with the “Hungarian style” that Brahms maintained to his dying day.
- An example of Brahms’s Hungarian style is found in the fourth movement of his Piano Quartet in G Minor of 1861, completed when he was 28 years old. Brahms labeled the movement *rondo alla zingarese* (“rondo in the gypsy style”). It consists of a series of gypsy-styled dance tunes (all of Brahms’s invention) that range in mood from the incredibly energized to the droopingly mawkish.
- In early 1851, word got out that a warrant had been issued for Reményi’s arrest. He went to the United States and stayed in New York for about six months before returning to Hamburg. There, Brahms and Reményi reunited, concertized together, and decided to go on tour.

At age 17, Johannes Brahms, an upright, Lutheran, north-German native of Hamburg, was floored by the exotic, rhythmically exciting gypsy-style music he discovered through Eduard Reményi.



The Tour

- The two made an odd couple when they left Hamburg in April of 1853. Brahms, not yet 20 years old, was tiny and slim, quiet, shy, and unassuming. Reményi, at 23, was full of bluster—a loud, egocentric huckster, always playing the role of the great virtuoso.
- In late May, Brahms and Reményi arrived in Hanover, where they met with Reményi's classmate, Joseph Joachim. Although Joachim was not quite 22 years old, he had been a staple on the European concert scene for 10 years. When he heard Brahms play his own compositions, he was “completely overwhelmed.”
- As a favor to Reményi, Joachim provided a letter of introduction to the great man of Hungarian music, Franz Liszt, who was living and working in the German city of Weimar. Privately, Joachim told Brahms that should things not work out with Reményi, he—Brahms—was always welcome to come back.
- In fact, things didn't work out between Brahms and Reményi. When the mismatched pair arrived in Weimar, they were greeted warmly by Liszt, but Brahms was completely miserable. He was out of his league with Liszt and his friends and probably bad-mouthed Liszt to Reményi. In June 1853, Brahms and Reményi parted ways.
- Brahms returned to Joachim, who arranged an introduction to Robert and Clara Schumann. In October 1853, six months after Brahms had left Hamburg, Robert Schumann published an article declaring that Johannes Brahms was the messiah of German music. The 20-year-old Brahms suddenly became famous, and he would stay that way until his death in 1897. Reményi lived for another 45 years, dying in 1898. And although he was quite famous in his time, Reményi is remembered today only because of his association with Brahms.
- Reményi later claimed that he and Brahms had parted as friends and remained so, but in fact, they never met or communicated again.

Reményi invented a number of stories after Brahms had become an international music star, basking in Brahms's reflected glory and taking credit for things he had no right to take credit for.

- Given his avowed “love” for Brahms, Reményi was often asked why he himself never performed Brahms's *Hungarian Dances*, of which no. 5 is the most famous. Reményi claimed that Brahms had stolen the tunes from him, and he could not, therefore, in good conscience, perform the works.
- The meeting of Brahms and Reményi and their subsequent relationship all took place because of a revolution in Hungary, which occurred in response to a revolution in Paris, which occurred because of a 1,001 other events that we can now, in hindsight, describe but could never have predicted.

Gottschalk: *The Union* (1862)

Lecture
12

The cultural gifts America has given the world are quite extraordinary, and nowhere is this truer than in the realm of music. A list of American-born musical genres would have to include spirituals, zydeco, bluegrass, and many more. What all these genres have in common and what makes them American is that they are syncretic: syntheses of diverse musical elements into wholes many times greater than their parts. Of greatest import to American music is the synthesis of West African and European musical traditions in North America, a synthesis that created a vast array of uniquely American genres, from gospel and soul, to ragtime and blues, to jazz and rock 'n' roll.

Bamboula

- As an example of the West African influence on American music, consider the opening of a piano piece called *Bamboula*, composed in 1845 by Louis Moreau Gottschalk. A *bamboula* is both a drum made by stretching a skin over a large cross-section of bamboo and a dance accompanied by such drums.
- Gottschalk uses the piano like a drum, and the music is syncopated, meaning that accents are heard not just on beats but in between beats. These sorts of West African-derived syncopations would later define the genre of piano music called *ragtime*.
- Note that in this music, West African-styled melodic and rhythmic elements are set to European harmonies and played on a European instrument. This is music that could only have been created in the melting pot of North America.



Many forms of drums and dance were brought to New Orleans by captive West Africans.

New Orleans

- From the moment it was founded in 1718, New Orleans has been one of North America's most important port cities. By 1840, it was the wealthiest and the third most populous city in the United States, behind only New York City and Baltimore, Maryland.
- New Orleans was also the destination for some two-thirds of the slaves brought to North America. Paradoxically, by 1860, the city also had 13,000 free people of color, that is, mixed-race people who

were classified as being *mulatto*. Mostly French speaking, these free mulattoes made up the artisan, educated, and professional classes of African Americans in New Orleans.

- Economically and culturally, the 40 years between 1820 and 1860 were the glory years of New Orleans. Culturally, New Orleans was a *mélange* of languages and traditions: European, Caribbean, Latin American, and African. The big history behind this lecture is how a composer raised in this cultural mish-mosh went on to become the first truly American composer, one who created a syncretic body of music that is equally European, African, Caribbean, and Hispanic.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk

- Louis Moreau Gottschalk was born in New Orleans on May 8, 1829. His father, Edward Gottschalk, was a London-born Jewish businessman. His mother, Aimée Bruslé Gottschalk, was a Catholic *creole*, that is, a person of French descent born in Louisiana. She was just 16 years old when Moreau (as her son was called) was born.
- The most important adults in Moreau's childhood were not his parents but, rather, his maternal grandmother, Josephine-Alix Bruslé, and his nurse, a slave named Sally who was about 46 years old when Moreau was born. Both his grandmother and Sally had been born in Saint-Domingue, the French colony today known as Haiti. They both survived the slave rebellion of 1793, though Moreau's grandmother's family was not so lucky.
- These two elderly women were Moreau's link with his family's past. Together, they filled his ears with creole lullabies and songs, with legends and stories of Saint-Domingue, with the lore of south Louisiana and the horrific slave revolt that they had miraculously escaped.
- Moreau's father, Edward, made his living speculating in real estate, commodities, and slaves. Later in life, Moreau wrote that slavery was "the greatest inequity which the age of barbarity bequeathed us."

- Moreau himself was fascinated by black music and culture. He began playing the piano at around age 5, and by the time he was 7, he was considered a child prodigy. As a composer of genius, Moreau did not imitate African American music. Instead, he absorbed its content and spirit and made the music his own.

Music in New Orleans

- There were three essential public venues for music in Gottschalk's New Orleans: theaters (meaning opera houses, concert halls, and standard theaters), ballrooms and dance halls, and the streets.
- In the decades before the Civil War, New Orleans was the opera capital of North America. In the 1830s, it had two permanent opera houses before any other city in the United States had even one.
- Among the most popular music played in ballrooms were orchestral arrangements of opera music. Given Gottschalk's exposure to opera and operatic arrangements, it should come as no surprise that he composed 31 fantasies for piano on themes from operas by Verdi, Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Wagner, and others.
- New Orleans also had a large number of so-called street-corner virtuosos—both schooled and unschooled musicians—who performed for small change.
- Gottschalk would have heard the banjo played everywhere in New Orleans. His piano piece *The Banjo*, composed in 1853, features numerous advanced banjo techniques, suggesting that it might represent the playing of a specific but unknown African American banjo player.
- The multiracial, multicultural family and city in which Gottschalk grew up shaped his artistic spirit. Thus, when the nearly 13-year-old Gottschalk traveled to Paris to complete his musical education, he carried with him a unique set of musical and cultural experiences.

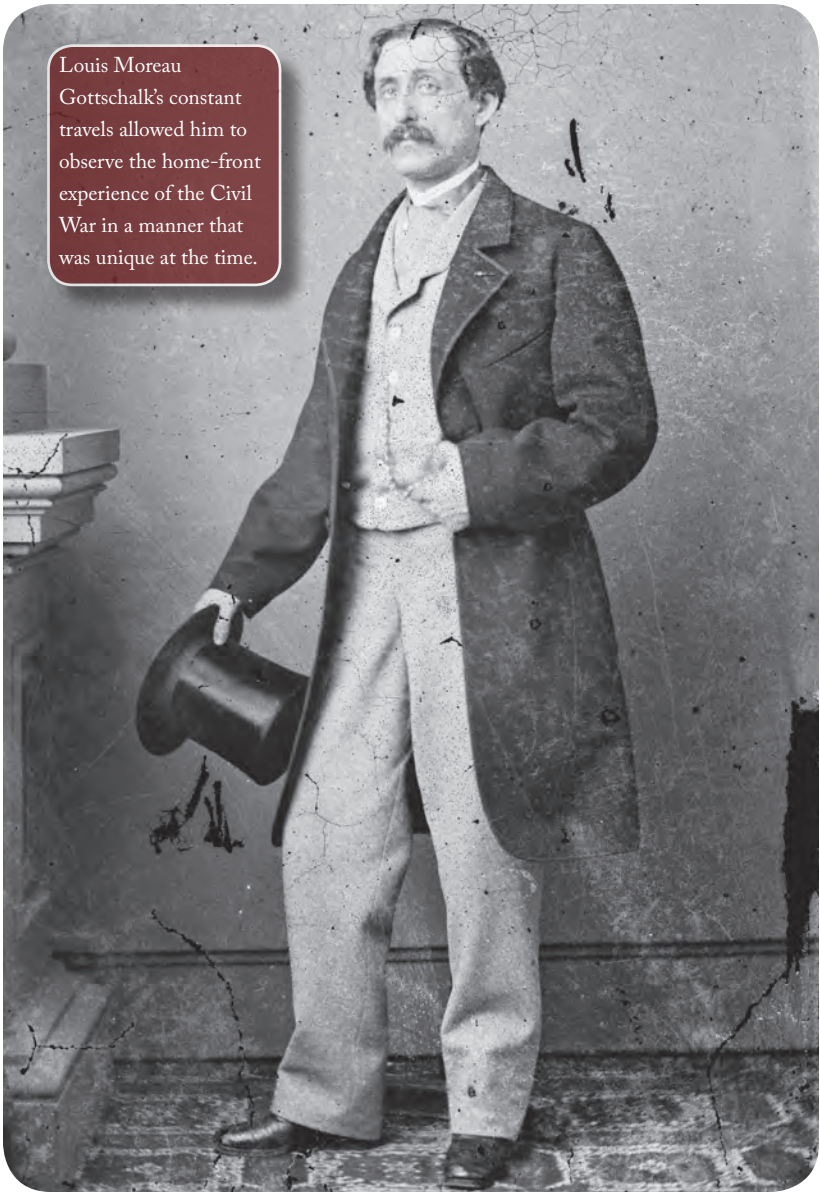
Gottschalk's Return to the United States

- Gottschalk returned to the United States from Europe in 1853. Generally considered to be among the greatest living pianists, he had played before hysterical crowds and was feted by royalty across Europe.
- But the United States that Gottschalk returned to was a different place than the one he had left behind. Industrialization, westward expansion, and immigration had brought greater wealth and population to the nation. Virtually every town in America had a concert hall, opera house, or auditorium in which traveling musicians and troupes could perform. Railroads, canals, and steamships also allowed “gypsies” to perform as they moved from town to town.
- This became Gottschalk's performing environment for the next eight years, punctuated by tours to Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Central and South America. By 1861, Gottschalk had established himself as the preeminent pianist living and working in the Western Hemisphere.
- Gottschalk was in Havana, Cuba, when the American Civil War broke out in April 1861. As a born Southerner, he was required to swear allegiance to the government of the United States and declare that he was “not in rebellion.” Having done so, he was allowed to return to the North, where he began his wartime career.
- He arrived in New York in February 1862 and immediately set to work on what would become his single most popular work: a virtuosic medley of patriotic American tunes called *The Union Concert Paraphrase*, or simply *The Union*.

The Union

- *The Union* was premiered on Washington's birthday in 1862, at New York's Academy of Music on a stage draped with American flags. The piece, which was dedicated to the commander of the Army of the Potomac, George B. McClellan, was received rapturously. What the audience heard was a *mélange*, consisting of some original music

Louis Moreau
Gottschalk's constant
travels allowed him to
observe the home-front
experience of the Civil
War in a manner that
was unique at the time.



sprinkled with quotations from “Hail Columbia,” “Yankee Doodle,” and “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

- The second half of Gottschalk's *The Union* begins with a lyric and tramping version of “Hail Columbia,” then swings into a bit of “Yankee Doodle” played simultaneously with “Hail Columbia,” followed by the climactic “Yankee Doodle”-driven conclusion.
- Musically, *The Union* is a melodramatic potboiler. Nevertheless, it helped to inspire the nation at a time of warfare, and it was the most important piece of artistic propaganda to emerge from the Northern side during the war.
- With *The Union* in hand, Gottschalk toured virtually non-stop for three years. The number of concerts he gave and the number of miles he traveled were prodigious. In the first year alone, Gottschalk logged some 95,000 miles.
- Over and over again, Gottschalk witnessed scenes of war: He saw trains filled with the wounded and weeping parents waiting at stations for the bodies of their sons; he was in New York in July 1863 when the Draft Riot broke out; he was in Chicago in December 1863 when he witnessed the first African American soldiers being mustered for duty. On platforms everywhere, he saw conscripts saying goodbye to their parents, wives, and children.
- On March 24, 1864, Gottschalk performed for President and Mrs. Lincoln, and two nights later, General Ulysses Grant and his staff attended a Gottschalk performance. Like almost every wartime concert, this one concluded with a performance of *The Union*.
- Without doubt, Gottschalk was a true patriot. A great many of his concerts were performed as benefits for wounded soldiers. The concerts brought money to veterans and joy (and solace) to literally hundreds of thousands of people, whose fathers, sons, and husbands

were at war. Never before had a performing artist managed to touch so many Americans.

Scandal, Exile, and Death

- On April 27, 1865—18 days after Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox—Gottschalk arrived in San Francisco for what was to be a five-month California tour. Unfortunately, the tour did not end happily. Accused of having “compromised the honor” of a young lady, Gottschalk fled the Bay Area. He died in Rio de Janeiro four years later, never returning to the United States.
- Gottschalk's death did not bring an end to the critical wasp's nest he had stirred up in life. His French roots and Romantic musical inclinations—as well as the circumstances surrounding his departure from San Francisco—opened him up to scathing criticism from the German-oriented musical establishments in New York and Boston. A postmortem article in *The New York World* excoriated him for composing nothing but “all sorts of dainty and effeminate caprices” and concluded that both Gottschalk and his music were immoral.
- In truth, it wasn't Gottschalk's morality (or lack thereof) that his critics attacked. Instead, his critics loathed Gottschalk for the very reasons we adore him: for his inclusivity, his musical pluralism, and his democratization of musical materials—in other words, for his Americanness, his willingness to synthesize what was considered by many to be gutter music with the compositional techniques and pianistic virtuosity of Western Europe.
- Gottschalk was far ahead of his time. At a time when America was perceived as the land of economic opportunity but cultural barbarity, when native-born composers did all they could to sound like Germans, Gottschalk's populist, New Orleans-inspired syncretic music stood too far apart from what was then the American musical mainstream. It wasn't until the mid-1920s that the public finally began to understand that to be American meant embracing something of

the energy, eclecticism, and plurality that are collectively the essence of the American experience.

- Gottschalk's exile from America ended in September of 1870, some 10 months after his death. That's when his body was placed aboard the steamer *Merrimack* for his journey back to the United States and burial in New York. The reason he wasn't buried in New Orleans was that he had sided with, and fought tirelessly for, the North, raising tremendous amounts of money for Northern war charities.
- Gottschalk's gravesite was impressive. Surrounded by a cast-iron railing decorated with lyres stood a five-foot-tall marble angel on a marble pedestal, holding a book inscribed with the titles of six of his best-known works. At her feet lay a marble lyre with its strings broken. In front of the pedestal was a marble tablet on which was carved: "L. M. Gottschalk—*Morte*."
- As time passed, Gottschalk was forgotten, and his gravesite became a ruin. Vandals smashed the statue, the fence disintegrated, and his name eroded and disappeared: a perfect metaphor for Gottschalk's music. Fortunately, not only is Gottschalk's music once again being played, but in October of 2012, the fence around his grave was replaced and a new statue, named the *Angel of Music*, was unveiled atop the marble pedestal.

In this lecture, we'll see how Giuseppe Verdi's operas—which were often about throwing off the yoke of oppression—became a rallying point for the Italian people. Verdi himself—a tough, uncompromising, independent, straight talker—offered Italians a masculine, creative, no-nonsense image that jibed perfectly with the national aspirations of the time. The big history behind this lecture is how Verdi almost inadvertently became the embodiment of the Italian Risorgimento: the Italian rebirth, the Italian quest for nationhood.

The Call to Verdi

- In early January 1861, Giuseppe Verdi—at 48 years old, the world's most famous composer of Italian-language operas—received a letter from Camillo Benso, count of Cavour. Count Cavour was about to become the first prime minister of a (nearly) united Italy, and he desperately needed Verdi to be part of the new Italian government.
- Cavour was the founding father of his nation. At the time he wrote to Verdi, he was 50 years old and laboring mightily to create a parliamentary government that would unite the newly declared state of Italy. Cavour understood that this new government would have to be popular in every sense if it was going to be considered as legitimate, both at home and abroad. And that is why he reached out to Verdi—because the only man more beloved in Italy than Count Cavour was Giuseppe Verdi.
- Verdi—taciturn in demeanor, direct, and easily irritated—wanted nothing to do with parliamentary politics. But because he was a patriot, he allowed his name to be put in nomination. Verdi carried his district with

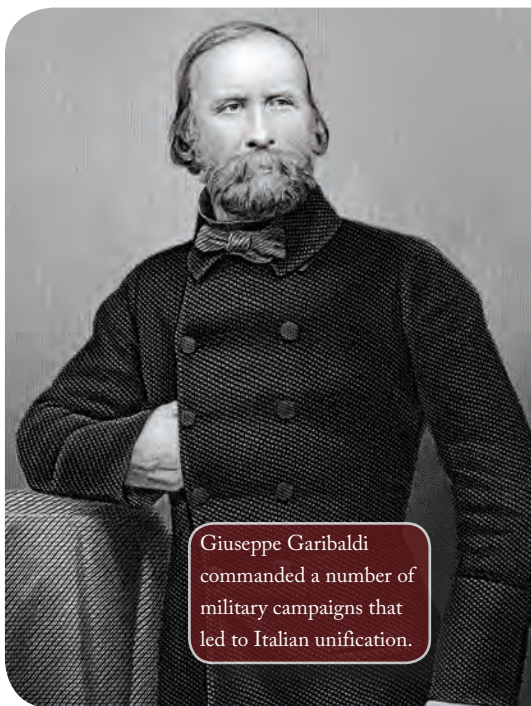
62.2 percent of the vote. Having spent the bulk of his adulthood trying to figure out how to get out of the opera business, Verdi now despaired at the thought of having to serve in parliament. He told everyone who'd listen that he planned to resign after just a few months.

- On February 18, 1861, Giuseppe Verdi was sworn in to the first Italian parliament by Vittorio Emanuele II himself. Despite his avowed reticence, Verdi turned out to be a regular and enthusiastic parliamentarian. On March 14, he participated in the vote to give Vittorio Emanuele the title of king. On March 27, he voted with the majority to declare Rome the capital of Italy.

The Risorgimento

- *Risorgimento* is the name given to the social and political movement that saw the consolidation of the various states on the Italian peninsula into a unified nation. This unification of Italy did not happen quickly; it took 56 years, from the end of the Napoleonic era in 1815 until 1871, when Rome finally became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy.
- As background information, when the Western Roman Empire fell in the 5th century C.E., the Italian peninsula was occupied by an Eastern-Germanic people called the Ostrogoths. Starting in the 6th century, the peninsula became a frontier battleground between the Lombards and the Byzantine Empire, the predominantly Greek-speaking eastern remnant of the Roman Empire.
- By 1500, the Italian peninsula was divided into a series of city-states, some of which were independent and some of which were occupied by larger, more powerful nation-states, most notably, the Austrian Empire and France. Great Italian writers and thinkers bemoaned this foreign domination.
- In 1796, a French army under the command of Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Italy in order to root the Austrians out of what today is northern Italy before marching on Vienna.

- Before heading to Vienna, Napoleon and his army took a stroll down the Italian peninsula. The objective was to extort money and art from the Italian principalities and send the loot home to the cash-strapped French government. Napoleon got as far south as the Kingdom of Naples. In just 30 days, almost without firing a shot, the French had established control over most of Italy.
- The French occupiers also set up republican governments across Italy. These governments promoted the legal and moral rights of the common people over those of the traditional aristocracy.
- When Napoleon was finally defeated and exiled in 1815, the Congress of Vienna redrew the map of Europe, intent on restoring the prerevolutionary status quo. But the clock could not be turned back—not in France, the Holy Roman Empire, or Italy.
- In the 1830s, four charismatic leaders emerged, around whom an Italian unification movement began to coalesce. These men were Giuseppe Mazzini, an Italian journalist, politician, and rabid activist for democracy and unification; a merchant marine captain named Giuseppe Garibaldi; Camillo Benso, count of Cavour, an Italian statesman and the first prime minister of a united Italy; and Vittorio Emanuele, the king of Piedmont-Sardinia.



Giuseppe Garibaldi commanded a number of military campaigns that led to Italian unification.



Vittorio Emanuel, king of Piedmont-Sardinia, became the king of Italy when his prime minister, Camillo Cavour, engineered Italy's unification.

Italy versus Austria

- The Italian insurrections—primarily against the Austrians—began in the 1820s, with absolutely no success. Pope Gregory XVI, interested in protecting the Papal States, invited the Austrians to come in and put down the revolts. The Austrians were only too happy to comply; they marched down the peninsula, crushing insurrections and arresting radicals as they went.
- The insurrections of 1848 and 1849 were much more difficult to put down, and they have collectively come to be known as the First Italian War of Independence. Once again, it was an Austrian army that swept the rebellious Italians from the field.

- The Second Italian War of Independence, fought in 1859, helped the Italian nationalists make progress. The war itself occurred as the result of a strange string of events. Essentially, France, in cahoots with Count Cavour and the Kingdom of Sardinia, baited the Austrians into a war. The decisive battle took place on June 24, 1859, at Solferino, during which the French and Sardinians were victorious.
- For their victory, the French received the Kingdom of Savoy, the city of Nice, and the region around Nice. But the big winner was the Kingdom of Sardinia, which annexed all of north-central Italy: the regions of Lombardy, Parma, Modena, Romagna, and Tuscany.
- At the same time, Cavour's ally Garibaldi turned his attention to southern Italy and Sicily, the so-called Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. The kingdom was ruled by Francis II, who was to be the last of the Bourbon family to rule in Italy.
- On May 6, 1860, Garibaldi and his cadre of volunteers landed in Sicily. There were just 1,000 of them, but they were highly motivated and well led. As Garibaldi piled up victories, more fighters flocked to his cause. He took Sicily, crossed the Strait of Messina to the Italian mainland, and marched north toward Naples, gathering strength as he went. On September 7, 1860, Garibaldi entered Naples to the triumphant cheers of everybody but the Bourbons.
- With victory over Naples, the only areas still to be added to the newly unified Italy were Veneto and Rome and the Papal States. Veneto was incorporated in 1866; Rome and the Papal States were taken in 1870 when France—which had guaranteed papal sovereignty to that time—could no longer do so because of its war with Prussia.

Giuseppe Verdi

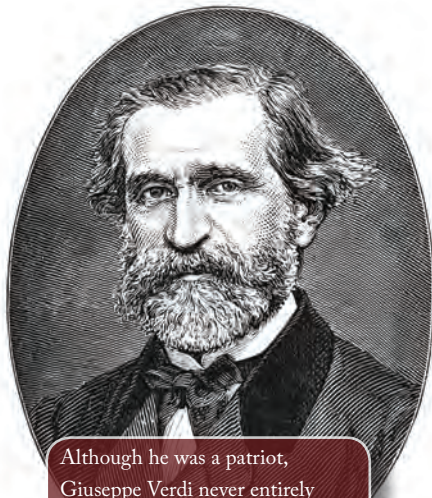
- Giuseppe Verdi was born in October 1813 in the village of Le Roncole in the north-central Italian duchy of Parma. At the time of Verdi's birth, Parma was part of Napoleon's First French Empire. As a result,

Verdi's birth name was recorded in French as Joseph Fortunin François, and he was—to his annoyance—technically and legally a citizen of France.

- Verdi's family moved to the nearby town of Busseto when he was a child. There, he acquired a patron, a wealthy merchant named Antonio Barezzi. Barezzi paid for Verdi's musical education in Milan, arranged for Verdi's first full-time music position, and sponsored Verdi's first public performance. Verdi went on to marry Barezzi's daughter Margherita.
- Life was not kind to the Verdis. Both of their children died before age 2. Buried in grief and debt, Verdi and Margherita struggled on.
- On November 17, 1839, less than a month after his son's death, Verdi's first opera—*Oberto*—was premiered at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, the most important and prestigious opera theater in Italy. The reviews ranged from so-so to very good, but La Scala director Bartolomeo Merelli was so impressed with Verdi that he contracted him to compose three additional operas.
- Verdi began work on the first of the three operas, a comedy entitled *King for a Day*. A few months later, in June 1840, Margherita died. Verdi was despondent. He returned home to Busseto and collapsed. Verdi wrote Merelli to tell him that he would not be returning to Milan and would not finish the opera. But Merelli refused to let Verdi out of his contract. Thus, Verdi dragged himself back to Milan and finished composing his comic opera.
- *King for a Day* received its premiere on September 5, 1840—a total flop. The next morning, Merelli called Verdi into his office and encouraged the composer to take heart. The remaining performances of *King for a Day* were cancelled, and in their place, Merelli remounted Verdi's *Oberto*.

Nabucco

- In December 1840, Verdi announced that he was through with music. But a few days later, Merelli gave Verdi a libretto by Temistocle Solera and urged him to read it. Verdi was taken with the line “*Va pensiero*” (“Fly, thought, on golden wings”). Verdi’s setting of the words *Va pensiero* then became the unofficial anthem of the Risorgimento.
- In the opera, the chorus is sung by the Israelites, who are being held captive in Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar (Nabucco, in Italian). When the opera was first performed in 1842, it didn’t take long for audiences to decide that the Israelites’ dream of freedom and homeland was their dream of freedom and homeland.
- *Nabucco* premiered in March 1842 and was a triumph. In the opera, the audience saw a story that was a thinly veiled metaphor for the Italian nation itself: a proud and ancient nation, held captive by oppressive foreigners, longing to be free. *Nabucco* spoke directly to the nationalist soul of the Italian people.
- *Nabucco* received an incredible 75 performances at La Scala alone during the year of its premiere, not counting other performances that took place almost immediately across Italy. Verdi was instantly recognized as a significant new operatic voice, and he was embraced



Although he was a patriot, Giuseppe Verdi never entirely embraced the role of “revolutionary artist” that circumstances had forced upon him.

as a great Italian patriot, a composer whose art served the cause of Italian nationhood.

Verdi's Political Career

- Despite his plans to resign from parliament after just a few months, Verdi did not. He continued to serve as a deputy for more than four years, bringing his intelligence, creativity, and no-nonsense attitude to the Chamber of Deputies. He was a tireless and effective advocate for those issues he held particularly dear: general education and music education, agriculture and flood control, and financial support for Italy's opera houses and theaters.
- Typical of Verdi, he downplayed his actions as a parliamentarian to the point of dismissing his participation entirely, claiming that he had neither "the inclination nor the will nor the talent for it."
- In fact, Verdi served his nation greatly. He might have begun his career as an inadvertent hero, but his operas inspired and united his countrymen at a time of revolution and nation building, and his actions as a politician helped to gain legitimacy for the "new" Italian nation.

Richard Wagner's towering, four-evening-long mega-masterwork entitled *The Ring of the Nibelung*—or *The Ring*—is typically discussed as an epic retelling of various Nordic sagas, central to which is a magic ring that grants its owner the power to rule the world. But *The Ring* is much more than that. It is, in fact, a metaphor for and a radical critique of 19th-century European society: a story of greed, corruption, sacrifice, and hope. The big history behind this lecture is the extent to which Wagner's extraordinary *Ring* cycle is a commentary on contemporary politics and society.

Background to *The Ring*

- Karl Marx wrote *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848, an auspicious year in European history.
- Starting in February 1848, revolutions broke out across Europe. Everywhere (or so it seemed), armed students and workers roamed the streets, representative assemblies met and demanded constitutions, kings and police chiefs fled, and republics were declared.
- It seemed to some that the promise of the French Revolution was finally being realized across the European continent, 59 years after it had begun. It seemed as if the arbitrary rule of hereditary monarchs would finally be replaced by republics in which the urban working class and the rural peasantry would share equally in political power and economic opportunity.
- It was class warfare, and Marx had seen it coming, as did many others, including a 35-year-old writer and composer named Richard Wagner, who was then living in Dresden. There, Wagner became increasingly involved with a community of socialist German

nationalists, giving speeches and writing and publishing incendiary, revolutionary articles and pamphlets under various pen names.

- In May 1849, an anti-monarchical uprising took place in Dresden. Because of his writings, Wagner was known to the authorities. Thus, when the uprising was put down within a few days, a warrant was issued for Wagner's arrest. He fled to Switzerland, where he lived until 1862. During this time, he began working on his great socioeconomic manifesto, *The Ring*.

Summary of *The Ring*

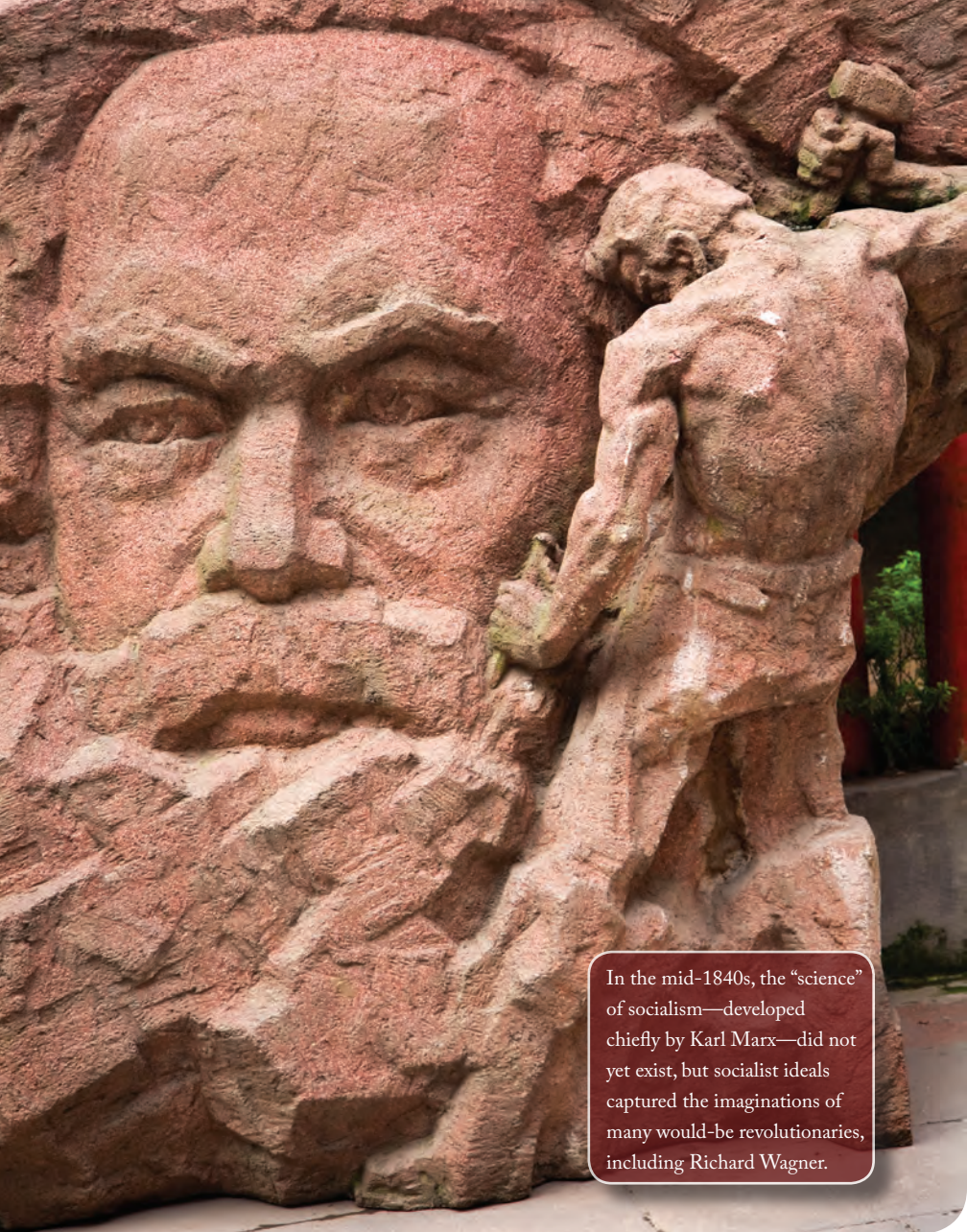
- The story of *The Ring* revolves around a magic golden ring that presumably grants its owner the power to rule the world.
- A love-starved dwarf named Alberich steals a lump of gold—the symbolic patrimony of the German nation—from the Rhine River. By renouncing love and forging the gold into a ring, Alberich becomes powerful and overbearing, convinced of his own supreme importance and invulnerability.
- But he doesn't keep the ring for long. Wotan, the king of the gods, steals it from Alberich and turns it over to a giant named Fasolt who, along with his brother, Fafner, has just built the gods' new castle, Valhalla. The giant Fafner kills Fasolt and takes the ring for himself. Fafner then uses his newfound power to turn himself into a dragon so that he might more effectively guard the ring.
- Wotan schemes for years to retrieve the ring. His "tool" in this endeavor is his own half-mortal grandson, Siegfried, who kills Fafner and takes the ring. Empowered by the ring, Siegfried awakens a sleeping beauty on a fiery mountaintop. She is a Valkyrie, a warrior princess named Brünnhilde, who happens to be Wotan's daughter.
- Siegfried gives the ring to Brünnhilde, and for a brief time, all is peaceful. But a bad man named Hagen drugs Siegfried, who steals the

ring from Brünnhilde. Hagen then kills Siegfried and attempts to claim the ring for himself.

- But Brünnhilde intercedes and returns the ring to the Rhine. She commits suicide on Siegfried's funeral pyre, also setting Valhalla on fire. The gods and all their corruption burn; Hagen drowns; the gold is restored to the Rhine; and nature is once again in balance. Thus begins the presumably utopian new age: the age of man, unsullied by corrupt gods and greedy giants, an age initiated by Brünnhilde's self-sacrifice and her love for Siegfried.

The Industrial Revolution

- *The Ring* represents many things to many people, and like any great work of art, it has been analyzed in many different ways. At its heart, however, *The Ring* is a socialist critique of 19th-century industrial society. We know this because Wagner was not just a composer but a voracious reader and a tireless writer of articles, pamphlets, and essays.
- Although it began in England around 1780, the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe was a 19th-century phenomenon. The extraordinary changes wrought by industrialization during the first half of the 19th century were a function of the symbiotic growth of large factories and great manufacturing cities and the population explosion that accompanied that growth.
- The factory owners, most of whom were self-made entrepreneurs, were the first industrial capitalists. They became rich, but their labor pool of mostly unskilled workers did not share in that wealth. That labor pool—men, women and children—worked shifts of 14 hours or more. The industrial neighborhoods in which they lived were horrific agglomerations of huts and shanties blackened with coal dust, and disease was everywhere to be found.
- By 1845, there was a growing sense among young German intellectuals, including Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx, and Richard Wagner, that the

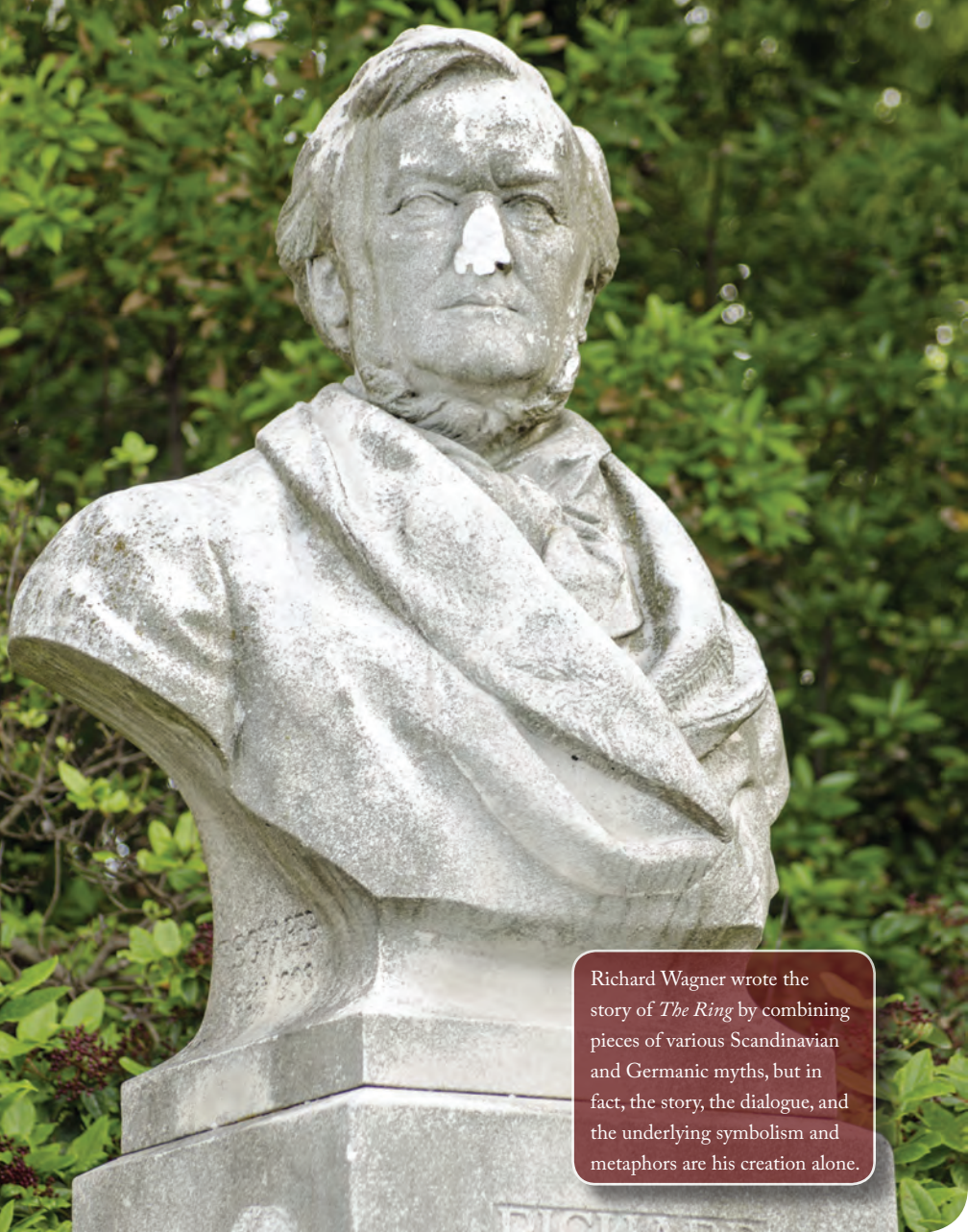


In the mid-1840s, the “science” of socialism—developed chiefly by Karl Marx—did not yet exist, but socialist ideals captured the imaginations of many would-be revolutionaries, including Richard Wagner.

sins of industrialization were the inevitable result of private ownership and the lust for profit: in a word, capitalism. For these intellectuals, the answer was a social and economic system in which ownership, management, and production were cooperative: in a word, socialism.

Wagner on Property

- According to the Wagner scholar Mark Berry, “Wagner nursed a profound hostility towards private property from his [youngest] days.” By 1848, he had come to believe that there was no such thing as private property; should someone claim exclusive right to something, it was tantamount to theft. This was Wagner’s belief when he began writing *The Ring*: that property and theft were synonymous.
- *The Ring* opens in the depths of the Rhine River. Soon, the rising sun strikes the fabled Rhine gold: the essence, the patrimony, the wealth of the German nation. The caretakers of the gold, the three Rhinemaidens, flit about and celebrate the gold.
- The Rhine gold is public property that belongs to and brings equilibrium to all things. But it is stolen by Alberich the dwarf, who turns it into his private property by forging it into a ring. He uses its power—like any good factory owner—to enslave his fellow Nibelungs, who must mine and smelt gold to feed Alberich’s bottomless greed.
- Alberich is but the first thief to covet the ring. Wotan, the king of the gods, steals it from Alberich. When advised to return the ring to the Rhine, Wotan says that he will keep it for himself. But it is coveted by a wide variety of beings until, finally, it is returned to the Rhine by Brünnhilde.
- At the moment the gold is returned to the Rhine, the old world of the gods ceases to be and a new age begins. *The Ring* concludes ethereally as dawn breaks on a new age.



Richard Wagner wrote the story of *The Ring* by combining pieces of various Scandinavian and Germanic myths, but in fact, the story, the dialogue, and the underlying symbolism and metaphors are his creation alone.

- As the curtain closes, everyone who touched or coveted the ring is dead, except Alberich, the greedy, repulsive dwarf. For Wagner, Alberich is the eternal Jew, a race unto himself, forever an “outsider” who can never assimilate and, thus, be loyal to another nation.

Wagner and Jews

- Wagner presents us with a great conundrum: How do we reconcile his extraordinary genius as a composer with his often base, sometimes even hateful words? The simple answer is that we can't. Repellant as it is, Wagner's anti-Semitism is intrinsic to his art. We can't reject Wagner's entire theatrical oeuvre because of what he said about Jews.
- In 1264, the Polish prince Boleslaus the Pious issued the General Charter of Jewish Liberties in Poland, thus granting Jews personal freedom and legal autonomy in Poland. On September 28, 1791—527 years after they were emancipated in Poland—Jews were emancipated in revolutionary France. The emancipation movement continued throughout the 1800s, ending with New Hampshire in 1877—the last American state to enact full Jewish emancipation.
- Like many German nationalists, Wagner viewed the newly emancipated Jews with undisguised revulsion. At a time when the German states were coalescing into a nation, Wagner perceived the Jews as a plague, greedy for wealth and lusting after German women—in a word: Alberich.
- Wagner's Nibelungs represent the newly emancipated Jews: the eternal outsiders, beasts driven by lust and greed. Smelters of metal and makers of trinkets, they pose no threat to the “surface world” as long as they remain in their ghettos—the caves of Nibelheim. However, they pose a terrible potential threat should their lust drive them to the surface. Alberich represents the most dangerous sort of Jew: the emancipated Jew, one whose desire for German women, wealth, and power threatens the bloodlines of the nations aboveground.

The Gods

- In *The Ring*, Wotan and his fellow gods represent Europe's monarchs and aristocracy. They are arrogant and corrupt, and they do little but strut around acting important, condemning to death others for crimes that they themselves commit. They are curiously vulnerable, as well. They are not immortal, nor are they all powerful. They rule by contract—making deals—rather than by command.
- As king, Wotan decides that the gods need a palatial new home, a place he will call Valhalla. Wotan contracts the construction to the brothers Fasolt and Fafner. In exchange for their work, they will receive the goddess of love, Freia, and her youth-giving golden apples.
- Of course, Wotan—who represents the modern state—has no intention of honoring the contract. The giants—who represent the working class—naively believe that he will.
 - Wotan sends his *consigliere*, Loge, to come up with an alternative form of payment. But Loge fails, and the giants move to take Freia. At that moment, the giants hear about Alberich's theft of the Rhine gold, the manufacture of the ring, and Alberich's hoard of gold. They offer Wotan to trade Freia for Alberich's gold.
 - Why would the giants give away the prospect of love and immortality for a pile of gold? Wagner explains in his essay "Art and Revolution": "Our god is gold; our religion the pursuit of wealth."
- For himself, Wotan wants the ring—and not just for the power it would give him but to deny that power to the Nibelungs. As Donner, the god of thunder, points out, "The dwarf would enslave us all, were the ring not snatched from him!" This cannot be allowed to happen. Thus, Wotan kidnaps Alberich, steals his gold, and violently tears the ring from Alberich's finger.
- Does Wotan realize that his actions toward Alberich are as criminal as those perpetrated by Alberich against the Rhinemaidens? Of course not. Wotan believes that his actions are entirely justified according to the needs of the state he embodies.

- Much to his dismay, Wotan does not get to keep the ring; the giants demand it as part of their payment, and regretfully, the king gives it up.

The Giants

- For Wagner, the giants represent the working class: powerful, unintelligent brutes who do the dirty jobs and must be carefully handled if peace is to be maintained. In his depiction of the giants, it's obvious that Wagner was not a real Marxist: His proletariat must be carefully controlled and can never be allowed to rule.
- As we saw, one of the giants, Fafner, kills his brother, Fasolt, and takes the ring of power and Alberich's hoard for himself. Fafner uses Alberich's magic helmet to turn himself into a dragon; he then retreats to a cave to guard his hoard for perpetuity. In doing so, he becomes what was for Wagner the most despicable of all creatures: the idle nouveau riche.
- Fafner—and the sloth and ill-gained capital he represents—is slain by Siegfried, the “new man” who, in Wagner's earlier drafts of *The Ring*, was to bring about the age of socialized humanity. But it took Wagner 25 years to create *The Ring*, and by the time he got to the end, the rabid, socialism-inspired politics of his youth had metamorphosed. In the end, it is not Siegfried who brings about a utopian society by destroying the gods and capitalism with his sword but, rather, his aunt Brünnhilde who redeems the world through love.

Dvořák: *From the New World* Symphony (1893)

Lecture
15

As schoolchildren, many of us were taught that Columbus discovered the Western Hemisphere and that the Europeans who came to the New World brought civilization to what had been a barbaric wilderness. However, over the last 50 years, this Eurocentric narrative has been discredited. In its place is a more nuanced version of what happens when different cultures collide as a result of predatory, invasive action. This lecture will take us back to a time before our national consciousness became so enlightened, to the 400th anniversary of Columbus's "discovery" of America. It was a celebration that brought about the composition of one of the great chestnuts in the orchestral repertoire, Antonin Dvořák's Symphony no. 9, the *New World Symphony*.

American Economic Success Story

- On July 21, 1892, President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation declaring Friday, October 21, 1892—the 400th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the New World—to be a national holiday. Thus did Harrison kick off a yearlong series of festivities that were to collectively represent a celebration of America's new and growing status as the preeminent industrial and technological power on the planet.
- Indeed, the 48 years from the end of the Civil War in 1865 to 1913 saw an explosion of innovation and industrialization that vaulted the United States past every other nation in the world.
 - For example, in 1870, Great Britain was by far the world's leading maker of steel, turning out 6.7 million tons, while the United States turned out 1.74 million and Germany, 1.56 million. By 1913, however,

U.S. steel production was at 31.5 million tons. Most of this steel was used in the railroad industry; in fact, it was railroads that made the American economic explosion possible.

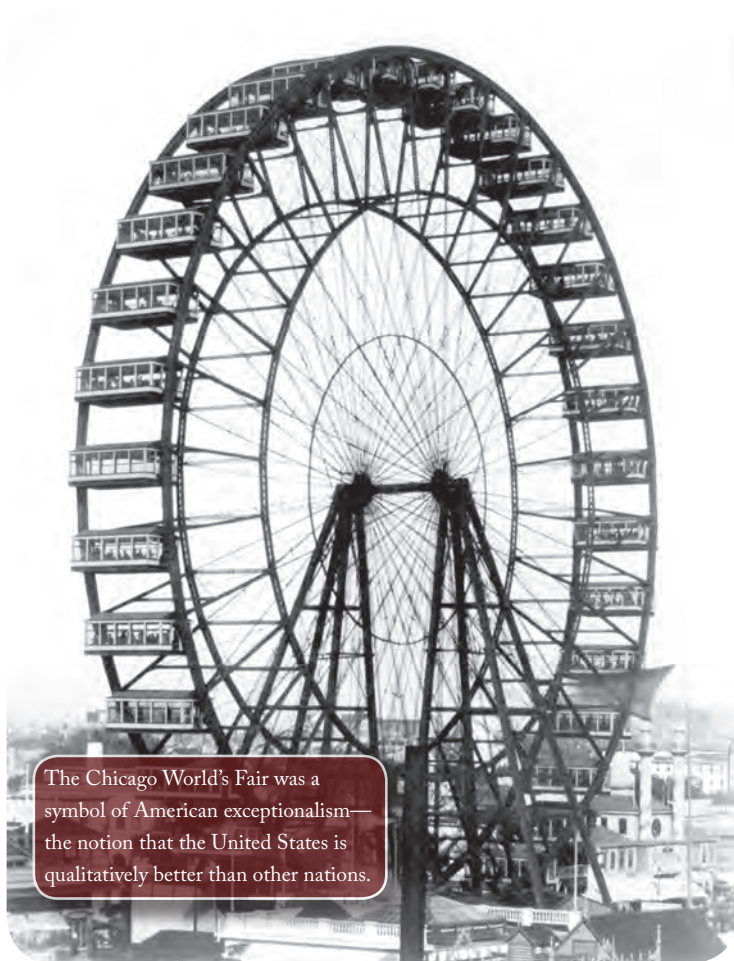
- Further, in 1860, the United Kingdom was the world leader in coal production, producing 79.3 million short tons of coal. By comparison, in 1859, the United States produced 15.6 million short tons of coal. By 1905, those figures had reversed. In 1905, the United Kingdom produced 236 million tons of coal, while the United States produced 351 million tons, by far the most in the world.
- Finally, in 1865, the United States harvested 175 million bushels of wheat, behind Russia, with 200 million bushels, and France, with 263 million bushels. By 1892, the United States had far surpassed Russia and France in wheat production, producing 680 million bushels to Russia's 408 million and France's 310 million.
- By 1892, it was clear that American industry and agriculture were producing at a level that had never before been seen. These semi-barbaric former colonies, which had so recently been at war with each other, were rewriting the record books on production, efficiency, and technological innovation.
- We might also look at a list of inventions from the United States between 1776 and 1892: the cotton gin, fire hydrant, combine harvester, steam shovel, escalator, grain elevator, and much, much more. These were the creations of a consumer-driven society, one that—to an astonishing extent—was in the position to enjoy itself.
- By 1892, the great American myth was firmly in place: The United States was the land of opportunity, where the streets were paved with gold, anything was possible, and any little boy could grow up to be president. The United States—the new kid on the international block—was taking its place beside the other great powers of the world.
- In honor of both America's new place in the world and the 400th anniversary of Columbus's first trans-Atlantic voyage, the U.S.

Congress decided to throw a party and invite the world. Four cities competed for the right to host this world's fair: Chicago, New York, St. Louis, and Washington DC. Chicago was chosen, and on May 1, 1893, the doors opened on what was designated the World's Fair: Columbian Exposition or the Chicago World's Fair.

- We should note that the word *Columbia* was used interchangeably with the word *America* to describe England's colonies in North America. By the time of the American Revolution, *Columbia* was considered the poetic alternative to *America*. Such songs as "Hail Columbia" and "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean" refer to the United States.
- Columbia also became the name of the female personification of the United States, the goddess of democracy, although she was later replaced by Lady Liberty.

The Chicago World's Fair

- Covering more than 600 acres, the Chicago World's Fair was the grandest exposition to its time. Although 46 countries were represented at the exposition, it was first and foremost a showcase for American industrialism and innovation and a symbol of the emerging notion of American exceptionalism. The exposition drew more than 27 million visitors in the six months it was open.
- Most of the more than 200 buildings built for the exposition followed the Beaux-Arts principles of design, a French neoclassical style of architecture rooted in balance, symmetry, and magnificence. Most of the buildings were finished with white stucco. That fact, along with the extensive use of electrical lighting, led the exposition to be known as the White City. The fair featured food courts, exhibitions, and performances of every conceivable type.
- Those visitors lucky enough to be in attendance on Saturday, August 12, 1893, could have participated in what was advertised as Bohemian Day, dedicated to Czechs and Moravians. The main event of the day was a concert of contemporary Czech music, performed by the



The Chicago World's Fair was a symbol of American exceptionalism—the notion that the United States is qualitatively better than other nations.

Chicago Orchestra and conducted in part by the famous Bohemian composer Antonin Dvořák. When Dvořák came on stage to conduct his Symphony no. 8 in G Major, the audience of 8,000 and the orchestra of 114 players gave him a two-minute ovation.

Dvořák in America

- By 1891—at the age of 50—Dvořák was that rarest of living composers: successful, appreciated by a worldwide public, and relatively wealthy. Regarded by many as being the second-greatest living composer after Brahms, the nationalist Czech accent with which Dvořák's music spoke made it, in fact, much more popular than Brahms's music.
- It was Dvořák's fame as a nationalist composer that made him a particularly desirable catch for a rich American woman named Jeannette Meyer Thurber. Mrs. Thurber was the wife of a wholesale grocer and was herself a musician of talent, having been educated at the Paris Conservatory. In Dvořák, Mrs. Thurber was not looking for a romantic catch but a role model.
- Jeannette Thurber was one of the greatest patrons of music the United States has ever known. In 1885, Thurber founded the National Conservatory of Music in New York. It was modeled on the Paris Conservatory, and its avowed mission was to create "a national musical spirit."
- On June 5, 1891, Thurber cabled Dvořák in Prague and offered him the directorship of the conservatory. She wanted Dvořák to help found—through his own example—an American school of composition at a time when almost every American composer wanted to sound like Brahms.
- Thurber made Dvořák an offer he couldn't refuse: Come to New York, become the director of the conservatory, teach three hours a day, and put together some concerts. For this most modest schedule, he would receive a three-year contract at \$15,000 a year—a 2,500 percent increase over Dvořák's salary at the Prague Conservatory and the equivalent today of around \$405,000 a year.
- Dvořák took the job, though it's important to note that he did not go to New York just for the money. In truth, Dvořák was seduced by Thurber's vision for American music. He was also in search of new inspiration, which he found in the New World. He was fascinated by the idea of America: a huge, sprawling, somewhat barbaric, energy-

filled meritocracy in which his own working-class roots would be considered an asset rather than a liability.

- Thus, Dvořák and his family arrived in America on September 27, 1892. Dvořák's arrival provoked a media frenzy, largely because he was the first famous European composer to ever visit the United States.
- Within a few weeks of Dvořák's arrival, the Columbian quadricentennial began. The composer had a front-row seat for one of the most sustained binges of Americana the nation had ever indulged. For her part, Thurber gave Dvořák a copy of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*, with the suggestion that he use it as the basis for what she called the great American opera.
- Dvořák's *New World Symphony*—composed in New York City between January 10 and May 24, 1893—was the first of his so-called American works. With its references to Negro spirituals, the plantation songs of Stephen Foster, and Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*, it has also been called the first great American symphony. In reality, it is a cosmopolitan work—a combination of a German-styled symphony and tone poem with a thin thematic veneer of Americanisms layered on top for local color.

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, *From the New World*

- Much has been made about the resemblance of a number of themes in the *New World Symphony* to preexisting songs, including “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”; Hattie Starr’s “Little Alabama Coon”; “Three Blind Mice”; and others. Most noticeable is the resemblance between Arthur Johnson’s song “Massa Dear” and the English horn theme that begins the second movement of the symphony.
- Over and over again, Dvořák labeled as nonsense the assertion that he had borrowed any preexisting melodies and inserted them into the symphony. Rather, he said that he had tried to capture and

reproduce the spirit of the spirituals and plantation songs he heard in America.

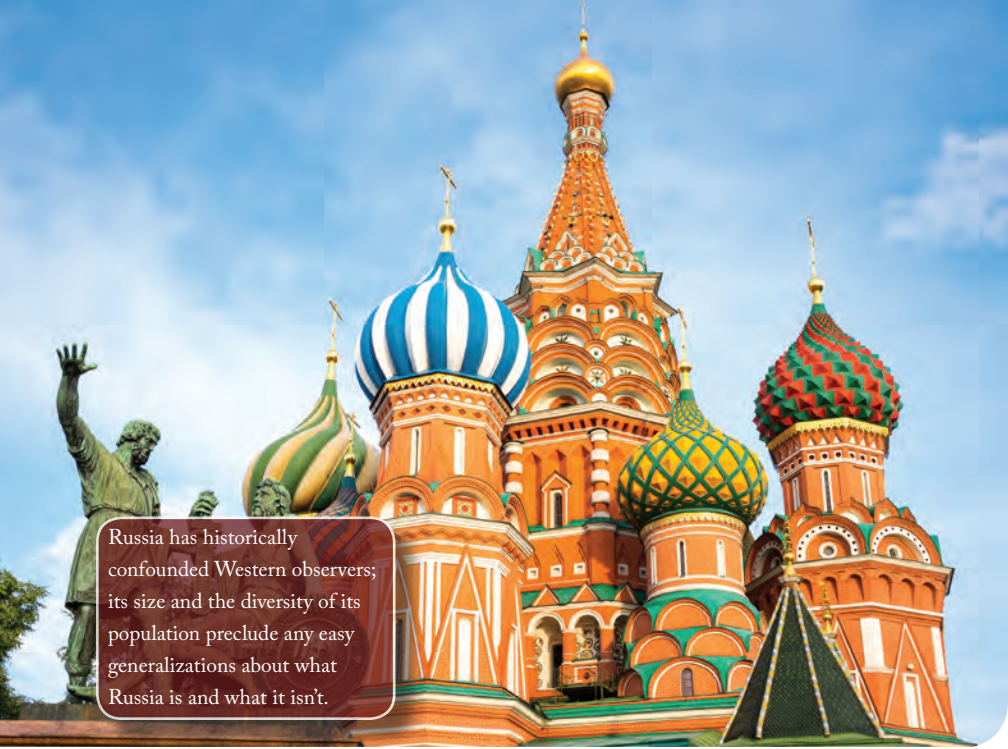
- Misinterpretation of the title of the symphony has also contributed to the confusion. Dvořák did not call the symphony *The New World*, a title that implies it contains music of the New World. Instead, he called it *From the New World*, which he later explained meant “greetings from the New World.”
- If Dvořák’s Ninth Symphony was influenced by any external source, that source would be Longfellow’s *The Song of Hiawatha*, which was originally published in 1855. He never wrote the *Hiawatha* opera that Thurber had suggested, but it is generally understood that the second and third movements of the symphony were inspired by scenes from the poem. In particular, Dvořák told a reporter from *The New York Herald* that the third-movement scherzo was inspired by Longfellow’s description of the dance of Pau-Puk-Keewis.
- The Ninth Symphony’s premiere at Carnegie Hall on December 16, 1893, was the greatest triumph of Dvořák’s compositional career. Henry T. Fink, writing for the *New York Evening Post* spoke for pretty much everybody when he wrote, “Any one who heard it could not deny that it is the greatest symphonic work ever composed in this country. A masterwork has been added to the symphonic literature.”
- Of all the events and hoopla surrounding the Columbian quadricentennial, not a single one had a greater long-term impact than Dvořák’s residency in the United States. He was the first great European composer to visit the United States, and because of his fame, his ideas about music—particularly American music—had tremendous impact on the American musical community. Dvořák recognized—long before the American mainstream did—that African American music would be the key to creating a uniquely American musical tradition.

Balakirev: Symphony No. 1 (1898)

Mikhail Glinka, who we discussed in an earlier lecture, is today considered the messiah of Russian concert music. But even messiahs need apostles to spread the word. Glinka's apostle—the man whose words and actions made Glinka the messiah of Russian music, the man who wrote the Glinka gospels by codifying and expanding on Glinka's work, the man who framed Russian music as being part of the geopolitics of the 19th century—was a composer, pianist, conductor, and teacher named Mily Alekseyevich Balakirev, who lived from 1837 to 1910. The big history behind this lecture is the emergence of Russian concert music in the 19th century and the degree to which that emergence was a reflection of contemporary geopolitics.

The Russian Question

- In its imperial and Soviet manifestations, the Russian-Soviet Empire consisted of fully one-sixth of the planet's landmass. Since 1547, this huge expanse has been governed by three kinds of autocrats: tsars, general secretaries of the Soviet Communist Party, and presidents of the Russian Federation.
- Russia was ruled by tsars from 1547 to 1917, when an exhausted and bankrupt nation ousted them. Unfortunately, Marxism's utopian dream was butchered by Bolshevism, which was just as repressive and autocratic as tsarism. Russia's post-Soviet flirtation with democracy lasted only nine years: from December 1991, when Mikhail Gorbachev formally dissolved the Soviet Union, until December 31, 1999, when Vladimir Putin became acting president of the Russian Federation.



Russia has historically confounded Western observers; its size and the diversity of its population preclude any easy generalizations about what Russia is and what it isn't.

- The question of what we should make of Russia and the Russians is not a new one. As Winston Churchill famously said in 1939: “I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” It may be that Russia—and Russian art and music, as well—can be understood only in the context of Russia itself.
- One of the “peculiarities” of Russia (peculiar to the Western mind) is the Russian predilection for *derzhavnost*: the desire for a strong, paternalistic, even authoritarian expansionist state, similar to the tsarist and Soviet states. When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, everyone in the West expected that Russia would naturally develop political and economic systems based on Western models. But that didn't happen; in fact, the Russian electorate has rejected the Western democratic model and market economy.

Russia's Geography

- At the heart of Russia's issues, character, and history is its geography. Its constant expansion represented, in large part, a never-ending quest for buffers against external enemies.
- Given their history and long, porous borders, the Russians have every reason to be paranoid of outsiders.
 - Russia hacked up and occupied Poland in the late 18th century, though that didn't eliminate all of its potential enemies.
 - The rise of Prussia and the unification of Germany put a large, wealthy, sophisticated, and militaristic nation on Russia's western border. To Russia's southwest was the Habsburg Empire; to the south was the Ottoman Empire. By the late 19th century, Russia also had a potential enemy to the east in the form of an industrialized and militarized Japan.
- For the Bolsheviks who took control in 1917, the world around Russia was an even more dangerous place than it had been under the tsar. When the great world revolution that Lenin had predicted failed to materialize, the newly christened Soviet Union found itself in a difficult spot, as a communist enclave surrounded by capitalist enemies. Thus, Russian-Soviet xenophobia became common and played a role in the debate over what was and what was not "Russian" music. At the center of that debate was Mily Balakirev.

The Decembrist Revolt and Its Aftermath

- On December 26, 1825, some 3,000 officers and men of the imperial Russian guard gathered in Senate Square in St. Petersburg and refused to swear allegiance to the new tsar, Nicholas I. Instead, they wanted Nicholas's older brother, Grand Duke Constantine, who was known to have liberal, constitutional leanings. The Decembrists assumed that once they made their demands known, the rest of the imperial guard and the army would flock to their side.

- Unfortunately, a brief standoff led to defeat when the artillery was called in. Those Decembrists not blown to pieces were put on trial; the ringleaders were hanged, and the rest were shipped off to Siberia.
- In the years following the Decembrist Revolt, the politically repressive policies of Tsar Nicholas I kept a tight lid on any unauthorized political debate. However, the spirit of liberalization and nationalism generated by the revolt was felt powerfully in the art world, where artists, writers, and musicians became increasingly preoccupied with defining and creating distinctively Russian art, literature, and music.
- The often rancorous debate within the Russian artistic community was that between the Zapadniki (pro-Westerners) and the Slavophiles. The Zapadniki believed that Russia should adopt the artistic innovations of Western Europe, while the Slavophiles considered that to be a betrayal of all things Russian.
- Mikhail Glinka, despite his Western training, fell into the Slavophile camp. His attempts to compose a symphony illustrate well his Slavophile leanings. Glinka's first attempt came in 1834, soon after his return to Russia. He wrote the first movement, then abandoned the piece. In 1852, he again tried to compose a symphony and again quit soon after he started. In his memoirs, Glinka explained the problem: "Not having the strength to get out of the German rut in the Development, I rejected my effort."
- Here, Glinka made a double confession. First, he admitted (perhaps inadvertently) that the compositional techniques required to develop his ideas—thematic fragmentation and metamorphosis, continuous modulation, and so forth—were technically beyond him. But, according to Glinka, because such techniques constitute "the German rut," he confessed no desire to master them because they were contrary to his Russian musical nature.
- Glinka understood full well that sonata form lay at the heart of the 18th- and 19th-century symphony. And at the heart of sonata form

is the development section, during which themes are dissected, manipulated, fragmented, and recombined.

- A development section requires that a composer rethink and reinterpret musical materials presented earlier in the movement.
- Glinka held that this sort of developmental process grew out of the German/Austrian predisposition for intellectualization, analysis, and logical argument—processes that Glinka believed were foreign to the Russian creative impulse.
- Glinka and other composers believed that a predisposition toward expository music was intrinsic to the Russian national musical character. They also believed that using German compositional models and techniques was akin to embracing the actions and aesthetic of the “evil musical empire.”

Mily Balakirev and the Russian Five

- More than anyone else, it was Mily Balakirev who postulated and promulgated precisely what Russian nationalist music should be. Balakirev was born in the city of Nizhny Novgorod, which was known as Gorky from 1932 to 1990. He was a child prodigy as both a pianist and conductor and began composing at the age of 15.
- In 1855—at age 18—Balakirev moved to St. Petersburg, where he met and played piano for his hero, Mikhail Glinka. Glinka—who was 51 at the time—was captivated by Balakirev’s piano playing but was somewhat less impressed with his compositional technique. Balakirev was self-taught as a composer, and it showed.
- Glinka died suddenly a little more than a year after meeting Balakirev. Thus, Balakirev lost his mentor but had an opportunity placed in his lap. Like Glinka, Balakirev believed that there should be a distinctly Russian school of music. With Glinka gone, Balakirev—20 years old and musically uneducated though he was—was as close to being Glinka’s successor as anyone in the tiny Russian musical community.

He put out his shingle in St. Petersburg as a composer, music teacher, and critic and went to work.

- Amazingly, Balakirev soon came to be accepted as Glinka's successor. During the 1860s, he gathered around him a group of young amateur composers who eventually changed the face of not just Russian music but Western concert music. Those composers were Cesar Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and Aleksandr Borodin. They came to be called the *Moguchaya Kuchka* ("the Five").

Vladimir Vasilyevich Stasov

- The man who coined the term *Moguchaya Kuchka* was the Russian pianist and critic Vladimir Vasilyevich Stasov. It was Stasov whose writing created the legend of this group of homegrown Russian composers, battling the forces of Germanic musical hegemony and emerging victorious, having birthed a new, authentic Russian music.
- Stasov helped Balakirev formulate the four principles that they claimed were the basic elements of true Russian music: (1) a rejection of academic technique and preexisting musical form; (2) the presence of an "oriental" element that embraced the Eastern, non-European provinces of the Russian Empire; (3) a preference for program music that reflected an anti-academic compositional stance; and (4) a quest for Russian national character. According to Balakirev and Stasov, this was best achieved by incorporating folk music or folk-like music into concert works.
- This belief in the power of folk music was part of the 19th-century nationalist program, and nowhere was it more pronounced than in Russia. Folk music was considered to be a product of nature, an ageless mirror of the mystical essence of a people.
- For example, the fourth and final movement of Balakirev's Symphony no. 1 is based on a folk song called "Sharlatarla from Partarla."

Anton and Nikolai Rubinstein

- Balakirev and his group were proud to be self-taught and dogmatically nationalist in their artistic outlook. That nationalist dogma required constant vigilance against the creeping, subversive influence of Western music on the “new” Russian music. In this, they had enemies at their gates: the Rubinstein brothers, Anton and Nikolai.
- Anton Rubinstein was a prolific Russian composer and one of the greatest pianists of the 19th century. In 1855, he published an article in a German magazine in which he wrote that attempts to create nationalist opera were doomed to failure and cited the operas of Glinka as examples. The battle lines were drawn.
- Rubinstein was an avowed Zapadniki (pro-Westerner) who was convinced that Russia would remain a musical backwater until proper, rigorous, Western European-style training was made available to Russian musicians. To that end, he founded the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1862 and quickly built it into a formidable institution. Three years later, Anton’s younger brother, Nikolai Rubinstein, opened the Moscow Conservatory.
- As far as the Five were concerned, the Rubinsteins were an existential threat to true Russian music. Balakirev stated categorically that the St. Petersburg Conservatory represented “a plot to bring all Russian music under the yoke of the German generals!”

Balakirev’s Lack of Training

- In the end, Balakirev’s xenophobia—and the technical deficiencies that were its result—hurt him both artistically and professionally. For all his skill, Balakirev lacked the technical knowledge and training that all professionals need to fall back on when the going gets tough. His inability to complete works in a timely manner was not the result of writer’s block but the epic slowness of someone who always has to grope blindly for a solution.

- Unfortunately, his slowness caused a number of Balakirev's most innovative works to be perceived as derivative. His Symphony no. 1 is a prime example.
- When he began the symphony in 1864, the 27-year-old Balakirev was in the process of codifying his theories regarding rhythm, melody, and the use of Russian folk song and orientalisms. Had Balakirev completed and premiered the symphony in two years, it would have been acclaimed for both its beauty and its innovations.
- However, the symphony was completed in 1897 and performed in 1898. By that time, Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky, and Borodin had been writing music that used Balakirev's innovative techniques for decades. As a result, Balakirev's Symphony no. 1 appeared to be derivative of the music of his students when, in fact, the opposite was true.
- More than just a practicing musician, Balakirev was a political musician, who responded artistically to the Russian tendency toward xenophobia that was part of the Russian national psyche. He established a baseline aesthetic that became—through the influence of his teaching and the force of his personality—what we today identify as being the Russian national compositional style. An apostle of Glinka, he became a prophet in his own right and helped lay the aesthetic groundwork for Russian concert music as we know it.

Janáček: Piano Sonata *I.X.1905* (1906)

By March 1939—thanks to the collusion, miscalculation, and cowardice of the Western powers—Hitler had managed to occupy and annex Austria and Czechoslovakia; convince some of his generals and most of his people that he was a genius leader; and put the fear of God into the rest of Europe. On September 1, 1939, the “hot war” in Europe began when Germany invaded Poland. As we all know, World War II ended badly for Hitler and Germany. What many of us probably don’t know is that the war in Europe did not end with the surrender of Germany in 1945. At that point, it was payback time, and there was—particularly in Czechoslovakia—hell to pay.

The Founding of Czechoslovakia

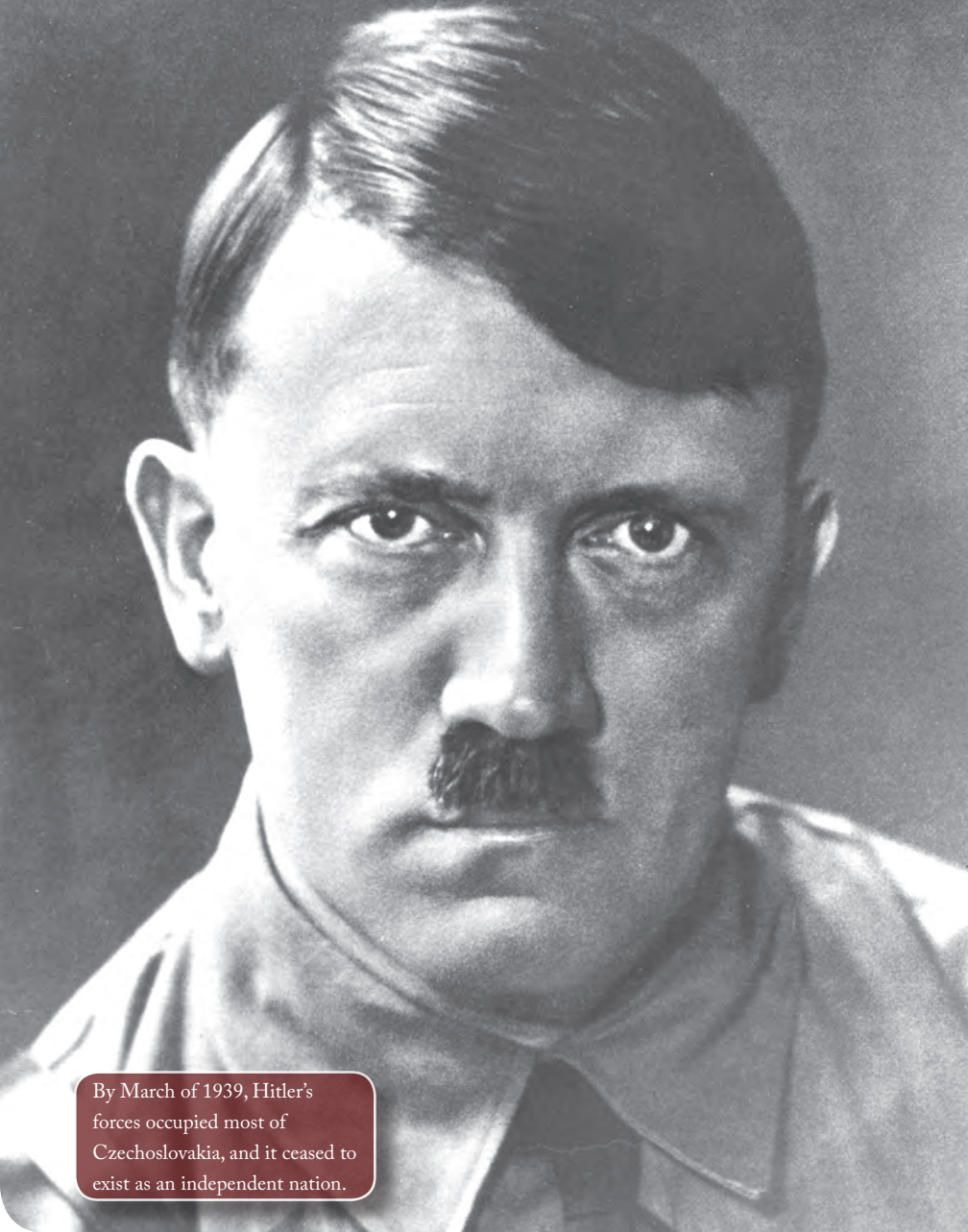
- The nation known as Czechoslovakia was founded on October 28, 1918, two weeks before the armistice that ended World War I. It officially came into existence on September 10, 1919, with the signing of the Treaty of Saint-Germain. The treaty formally dissolved the Austro-Hungarian Empire and created three new states: Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia.
- The new country of Czechoslovakia had a substantial German minority. At the time of its creation, 51 percent of the country was Czech, 22 percent was German, 16 percent was Slovak, and the remainder was a smattering of Hungarians, Ruthenians, Jews, and Poles.
- The German-speaking minority and the native Czechs did not always get along. During the days of the Austrian Empire, the German-speaking minority represented the ruling class in what was to become Czechoslovakia. They controlled the economy, the government, and

many of the cultural institutions, all of which rubbed the increasingly nationalistic Czech majority the wrong way.

- With the creation of Czechoslovakia, the Czech majority now held sway over the once-dominant German minority. That German minority was clustered in the northern, western, and southwestern edges of Bohemia and Moravia, lands that bordered on Austria and Germany. The Germans collectively called these areas Sudetenland and themselves Sudeten Germans.
- When the Nazis marched into Czechoslovakia in 1938, the Sudeten Germans celebrated. But their celebration officially ended about six years later, when—on May 9, 1945—Soviet Red Army troops entered Prague.

Retribution

- The atrocities perpetrated on the people of Czechoslovakia by the Nazis were legion. Some 55,000 Czechs and Slovaks were murdered outright. Roughly 350,000 Czech citizens were enslaved and dispatched to work as laborers throughout the German Reich. The Czech Jewish community—118,000 people—simply ceased to exist.
- With the war officially over in May 1945, it was time for retribution. During the war, some 1.6 million Germans living in Poland had fled to Czechoslovakia as the Red Army advanced. As a result, in May 1945 there were, according to German estimates, about 4.6 million German civilians in Czechoslovakia—but not for long.
- Murderous and unorganized acts of violence toward the Czech German community began immediately after the end of formal hostilities. These random acts of violence were followed by a command by General Zdeněk Novák—head of the Prague military command—to “deport all Germans within the historical Czech borders.”



By March of 1939, Hitler's forces occupied most of Czechoslovakia, and it ceased to exist as an independent nation.

- Thus began a brutal ethnic cleansing. Between 1945 and 1948, about 90 percent of the ethnic Germans in Czechoslovakia—roughly 4 million people—were forcibly expelled and shipped to East or West Germany, their homes and property confiscated. Concentration camps were reopened and stocked with German families, and massacres took place.
- The age-old enmity in Czech lands between the German/Austrian minority and the Czech majority profoundly shaped the life and music of the Moravian-born composer Leoš Janáček.

Leoš Janáček

- Leoš Janáček was born in 1854 in the village of Hukvaldy in the Moravia-Silesia region of today's Czech Republic. At the time of Janáček's birth, Moravia was part of the Austrian Empire, and his hometown was known by its German name, Hochwald. He was the ninth child of the village schoolmaster and choirmaster.
- Because he had a first-rate singing voice, Janáček received, at age 11, a scholarship to be a chorister and to attend the Queen's Monastery in the Moravian city of Brno.
- The Queen's Monastery was, in fact, an excellent music conservatory, and Janáček did well studying singing, organ, and piano. On graduating at the age of 15, he trained as a teacher. He began composing at around the age of 21; his first compositions were simple works influenced by folk music for the various amateur choral groups he conducted.
- Feeling he had more to learn, Janáček studied at the Prague Organ School—another high-profile conservatory of music—in 1874 and 1875. He went home to Brno, resumed composing, and returned to his job as choirmaster.
- In 1879—at the age of 25—Janáček was admitted to the Leipzig Conservatory. Founded by Felix Mendelssohn in 1843, the Leipzig

Conservatory was considered one of the finest schools of music in the German-speaking world. Janáček lasted there only a little more than four months. He hated his classes and thought his teachers were too old, too slow, and too pedantic. Mostly, though, he hated the “German-ness” of Leipzig and the conservatory—what he considered to be the smug arrogance and intolerable conceit of the Germans.

- In 1830, Janáček traveled to Vienna, where he was admitted to the Vienna Conservatory—again, one of the premier music schools in the world. This time, he lasted only two months. Upset when he failed to receive a prize in composition—and believing himself to be the victim of a conspiracy to embarrass and discredit a Czech composer—he returned to Brno. He then married Zdenka Schulzova, a woman of German descent.
- On his return to Brno, Janáček’s sense of Czech nationalism—and his hatred of Austrians and Germans—came into full bloom. He refused to attend the German-language theaters and concert halls that dominated Brno’s cultural life and even refused to ride on the city trams until Czechs were in the majority on the Brno town council. It’s important to note that his attitudes toward Germans and Austrians and his Czech nationalism were typical for the time.

The Czech National Revival

- Life in what would eventually become Czechoslovakia took a bad turn back in 1618, when the aging Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Matthias was forced by the future emperor—his cousin Ferdinand—to revoke the so-called Letter of Majesty that had guaranteed freedom of religion in Bohemia.
- Members of the Bohemian diet revolted and expressed their displeasure on May 23, 1618, by throwing two imperial Habsburg regents and their secretary out a third-story window of Hradčany Castle in Prague. Incredibly, all three survived the 70-foot fall.

- Not surprisingly, the Austrian Habsburgs reacted poorly. This so-called Defenestration of Prague precipitated the Thirty Years' War, which eventually involved most of Europe.
- Immediately following this episode, the Bohemians declared the Habsburg emperor deposed and elected Frederick as king of Bohemia. Frederick was a poor leader, and he and his Protestant army were crushed by the Austrians at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620.
- As punishment for its actions, Bohemia was demoted from a Habsburg kingdom to an "imperial crown land," and the seat of the Holy Roman Empire was permanently relocated from Prague to Vienna. Overnight, Prague went from being a capital city to a backwater.
- The Austrians then introduced what was called "forcible Germanization": the introduction of German as the sole official language, oppressive taxation, and absentee landownership. Together, these moves reduced the bulk of the Czech population to misery.

The Czech Language

- For the next 200 years, the Czech language was banned from schools, newspapers, the courts, and government administration. Czech-language books were burned. Over time, the Czech language was reduced to a means of communication between illiterate peasants.
- The Czech national revival that began in the early 19th century was, initially, about the revival of the language. The Austrian Habsburgs, weakened by their encounters with Napoleon's France, were powerless to stop this grassroots revival. By the 1860s, Czech folklore, folk music, and folk traditions, which had survived in the countryside, were explored and embraced by nationalist Czech artists in search of inspiration and authenticity.
- One of those artists was Leoš Janáček. As he matured as a composer, the importance of Moravian folk music and the Czech language itself

became his decisive influences. From his study of folk song, Janáček came to believe that melody was a direct outgrowth of language. To that end, he developed a system of what he called *speech melody*: He would jot down melodic ideas based on the cadence of the spoken word. As a result, his melodic language became a direct outgrowth of his Czech language.

From the Street 1.X.1905

- The title of Janáček's piano sonata *From the Street 1.X.1905* ("the first of October 1905") refers to a protest that began in Brno on October 1, 1905, and climaxed with the killing of a protester on the following day. The two movements of the sonata correspond with the events of those two days.
- Brno, as the capital city of Moravia, had a significant population of German-speaking bureaucrats, government officials, and members of the upper class. Tension between the Germans and Czechs in Brno slowly increased during the second half of the 19th century, as Czechs demanded—and were grudgingly allowed—to build a Czech-language grammar school, a community concert hall and cultural center, and a theater.
- The bad blood between the Czechs and the Germans went from simmer to full boil during the first years of the 20th century. The decisive issue was higher education. In 1901, Czech parliamentarians in Bohemia and Moravia demanded that a Czech-language university be established in Brno to complement one already established in Prague. However, the German town council of Brno rejected the idea.
- The German community in Brno called for a demonstration to support the town council's decision. On October 1, 1905, German speakers from across Moravia, Bohemia, and Austria gathered in the center of town. At the same time, Czech counter-demonstrators gathered outside the Czech community concert hall. Inevitably, the groups clashed, at which point German-led police and German regimental

troops attacked the Czechs. The 51-year-old Leoš Janáček was right in the middle of the melee.

- Things came to a head the next day, when the military again attacked a Czech demonstration outside the entrance of the community concert hall. A 20-year-old Moravian carpenter named František Pavlík was bayoneted and died soon after. Janáček's reaction was the composition of *From the Street, October 1, 1905*.
- Janáček's sonata is as stark and chilling as the events that inspired it. The first movement—entitled “The Presentiment”—is cast in sonata form. The first theme—the opening of the movement—begins quietly and plaintively, though it quickly builds up to a thunderous, impassioned climax. The second theme—sweet and melancholy—ends suddenly, abruptly, and almost violently.
- The second movement—entitled “The Death”—begins hesitantly and mysteriously. It then builds to a fervent climax before receding back to the hesitant, mysterious place from which it began. This movement is not “about” the death of František Pavlík per se; it is much more private and intimate than that. It is about Janáček's own reactions to Pavlík's death: his wonder, rage, and grief over this senseless act.

The Sonata That Almost Wasn't

- Janáček started composing the sonata immediately following Pavlík's funeral on October 4, 1905, and completed it in early January 1906. In its original form, the piece was three movements long; the third movement was a funeral march. Having finished it, Janáček sent a copy of the sonata to a pianist named Ludmila Tučková, who was to premiere it in Brno on January 27, 1906.
- Hours before the premiere was to take place, the pianist played the piece through for the self-critical Janáček. He stood up, walked over to the piano, took the score, and tore out the entire third movement. He then threw the movement into a fireplace.

- Soon after, in Prague, the sonata was performed at a private concert from Janáček's handwritten manuscript. Janáček, still dissatisfied with the piece, now took extreme measures. He threw the manuscript off a bridge and into the Vltava River.
- Janáček—and everyone else—thought that the sonata was gone forever. But Ludmila Tučková still possessed a copy, minus the third movement. Eighteen years later, Tučková rediscovered the two surviving movements when sifting through her sheet music. Thus, *From the Street, October 1, 1905* received what amounted to its second premiere on October 23, 1924. An older and wiser Janáček was thrilled to learn that the two movements had survived and immediately sanctioned the sonata's publication.

Rimsky-Korsakov: *The Golden Cockerel* (1907)

Lecture
18

Musicologist Richard Taruskin, the most important scholar of Russian music of his generation, had this to say about Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov: “His contribution [is] simply staggering. Excepting only Tchaikovsky [and Shostakovich], virtually the whole Russian opera repertory is Rimsky’s creation. He is perhaps the most underrated composer of all time.” In this lecture, we’ll examine Rimsky-Korsakov’s 15th and final opera, *The Golden Cockerel*.

The Story of *The Golden Cockerel*

- *The Golden Cockerel* is a tragic-comic fairytale, set in three acts with a short prelude and postlude. The opera opens with an orchestral introduction that presents the themes associated with each major character. The introduction begins with a muted trumpet playing the theme associated with the Golden Cockerel itself.
- Act I takes place in the great hall of the palace of Tsar Dodon. The tsar, exhausted with worry, is surrounded by his *boyars*, his two sons, and the commander of his army. He informs his entourage that all he wants in his old age is peace and quiet, but he senses that “a massacre is coming.”
- The tsar’s sons, Guidon and Afron, who hate each other, offer up various moronic strategies for combating the approaching menace, and the tsar endorses their plans. Just then, a mysterious astrologer enters and presents the tsar with a gift: a golden cockerel. The astrologer promises that if trouble is coming, the bird will warn them by crowing. The tsar is thrilled and promises to reward the astrologer with whatever he wants.

- The tsar, finally able to sleep, takes a nap, but soon, the bird crows; trouble is coming from the east. The tsar wakes up, divides an army between his two inept sons, and sends them off to find and defeat the enemy. Another warning from the cockerel indicates more danger, and the tsar himself rides out to see what's happening.
- Act II takes place in a narrow ravine at night. As Tsar Dodon and his army enter, they are greeted by a terrible sight: The bodies of the tsar's soldiers lie everywhere, and at center stage are the bodies of his sons, with their swords thrust through each other. Tsar Dodon falls to his knees and sings his grief.
- As day breaks, a large tent appears at the back of the stage. Assuming that the tent is occupied by the enemy, Tsar Dodon orders it destroyed. But then, a beautiful young woman emerges from the tent with four female slaves. She is the queen of Shemakha, and she has emerged to sing her "Hymn to the Sun."
- Tsar Dodon takes one look at this enchantress and is instantly smitten. For her part, the queen informs the tsar that she is the queen of his enemies and, using her beauty alone, she will conquer the tsar. She then takes the stuttering, doddering, and clearly excited tsar into her tent and sings a praise to her own beauty.
- In short order, the tsar offers the queen his hand in marriage, his throne, his possessions, and his country. She accepts it all. They depart for the capital in a golden chariot. As they ride off, the queen's slaves—who have obviously seen their queen do this before—comment on the tsar.
 - Out of context, the comments are merely funny: The tsar is an old, inept buffoon, a clown in king's clothing.
 - However, this opera was composed immediately after a disastrous war with Japan and during the subsequent civil unrest that led to the massacre in St. Petersburg known as Bloody Sunday. The slaves' comments represent the opinions of the librettist Vladimir Belsky and Rimsky-Korsakov on the current tsar.

- Although the audience doesn't know it, the queen is responsible for the deaths of the tsar's soldiers and his sons. She might appear to be beautiful, but she is, in fact, the incarnation of evil.
- Act III takes place in front of the royal palace. The day is sunny, although dark clouds are approaching from the east. The golden chariot bearing the tsar and his queen enters at the head of a long processional. The music Rimsky-Korsakov provides is both circus-like and ominous.
- The crowd salutes the tsar and his bride-to-be. What Belsky and Rimsky-Korsakov deliver here is an acid-dripping parody of the stock-in-trade "Glory" (or "Slava") chorus that had been standard in Russian opera since Glinka. The chorus itself would seem to be suitably joyful and magnificent, but the parody is in the words. The chorus sings: "We are your loyal serfs, happy to serve, / And happy to kiss the tsar's feet!"
- Belsky and Rimsky-Korsakov were being neither ironic nor cynical about the Russian people; they knew perfectly well that given the events of January 1905, the Russian common people were no longer happy. This text reflects the wishful thinking of the tsar himself, his conviction that his "people" had no other purpose than to serve their tsar.
- The tsar is now approached by the astrologer, who reminds him of his earlier promise to give the astrologer anything he wanted. Of course, the astrologer wants the queen. After a brief argument, the tsar hits the astrologer over the head with his scepter and dashes out his brains.
- The queen of Shemakha thinks this is the funniest thing she's ever seen. The tsar, stunned by what he has just done, asks, "Did I kill him?" The queen replies: "That's how to do it! You can't coddle them. / That's what serfs are for: / If we don't like them, we flatten them!"

- The queen then signals the Golden Cockerel, which flies down from its perch and pecks the tsar to death. The queen laughs insanely, lightning and thunder strike, the stage is plunged into darkness, and when the lights come up, the queen and the cockerel are gone.
- Numb with despair, the crowd sees that the tsar is dead and asks: "What will the new day bring? / How can we exist without the tsar?"

Artistic Choices

- In his preface to the score of the opera, Belsky credits the story to Aleksandr Pushkin, and traces Pushkin's story back to various Russian fairytales. But Pushkin's 1834 poem entitled "The Tale of the Golden Cockerel" was, in fact, based on two chapters from a collection of stories published by Washington Irving. In truth, *The Golden Cockerel* had nothing to do with deep Russian folk roots and everything to do with current events.
- Pushkin's story is fairly brief, and its characters are minimally developed. Thus, in creating the opera, Rimsky-Korsakov and Belsky had to flesh out the story and the characters.
- In doing so, they added highly politicized material, shaped by current events that had brought the Russian military to its knees and nearly cost Tsar Nicholas II his throne. The opera is a satirical denunciation of Tsar Nicholas II, his family, the aristocracy, and the government; a blunt censure of the Russian military; and a biting mockery of the traditional obedience of the Russian people.

Historical Background

- Aleksandr Nikolayevich Romanov was born on April 29, 1818, in Moscow. In 1855, he was crowned Tsar Alexander II, and he proved to be a fairly enlightened ruler.

- In 1861, Alexander emancipated the Russian serfs. He reorganized the Russian judiciary, abolished capital punishment, encouraged local self-government, and promoted education.
- On March 12, 1881, Alexander and his advisors completed plans for the election of a Russian parliament, or Duma. The announcement of this reform was scheduled for March 14, 1881.
- But the announcement was never made because on March 13, 1881, a bomb was thrown between Alexander's legs by a revolutionary. His death later that day was witnessed by his son, Alexander III, and his grandson, Nicholas II.
- Alexander's liberal reforms died with him. Violent suppression immediately did away with anything resembling personal freedom for the great majority of Russians.

War with Japan

- Over the years, many attempts had been made to open up Japan to trade, but all of them were rebuffed. However, in 1853—two years before Alexander II became tsar—Commodore Matthew C. Perry of the U.S. Navy arrived in Japan with his fleet of Black Ships and informed the Japanese that it was time to open trade with the West.
- Within 18 months, Japan had established diplomatic relations, friendship treaties, and trade agreements with both the United States and Great Britain. It also assimilated Western ideas, technology, and culture. By the late 19th century, Japan had become a modern industrial state, powerful enough to preserve its sovereignty.
- Meanwhile, Russia had been expanding eastward throughout the second half of the 19th century. In 1898, Russia coerced the Chinese government into leasing to Russia the region and harbor of Port Arthur at the southern tip of the Liaodong Peninsula, just west of Korea. The Russians quickly built a rail line joining Port Arthur to the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

- Russia militarized Port Arthur and began encroaching on Korea, which the Japanese considered as being within their sphere of influence. Japan severed diplomatic relations with Russia on February 6, 1904, and declared war two days later. However, the Japanese Imperial Navy staged a sneak attack against the Russian Far East Fleet at Port Arthur three hours before declaring war.
- Port Arthur was besieged and captured, and the Russian Far East Fleet was almost entirely destroyed. Russian forces suffered shocking defeats to the Japanese in Manchuria, as well. The crowning blow came on May 27 and 28, 1905, when the Russian Baltic Fleet, consisting of 38 ships, met the Japanese fleet in the Tsushima Strait in the Sea of Japan. The Russians lost 4,380 dead and 5,917 captured, along with 34 ships. Humiliated, Russia sued for peace.
- For Russia and the tsar, the war with Japan was an unmitigated disaster. In 15 months, the Russian navy had been largely destroyed and the Russian army routed. The people of Russia now perceived the tsar and his military leadership as bumbling, doddering fools.

Events on the Russian Home Front

- Even as the military disaster was unfolding, equally disastrous events were taking place on the Russian home front, including strikes, protests, riots, and the emergence of political parties aimed at overthrowing the monarchy.
- On January 16, 1905, a strike was called at the Putilov plant in St. Petersburg, which manufactured railway supplies, artillery, and munitions. Within days, workers from 382 other factories were on strike. By January 21, 1905, St. Petersburg was effectively shut down, with no electricity, newspapers, or public services.
- On Sunday, January 22, 1905, an Orthodox priest named Georgy Gapon led a procession to the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg to deliver a petition to the tsar. Troops opened fire, killing somewhere



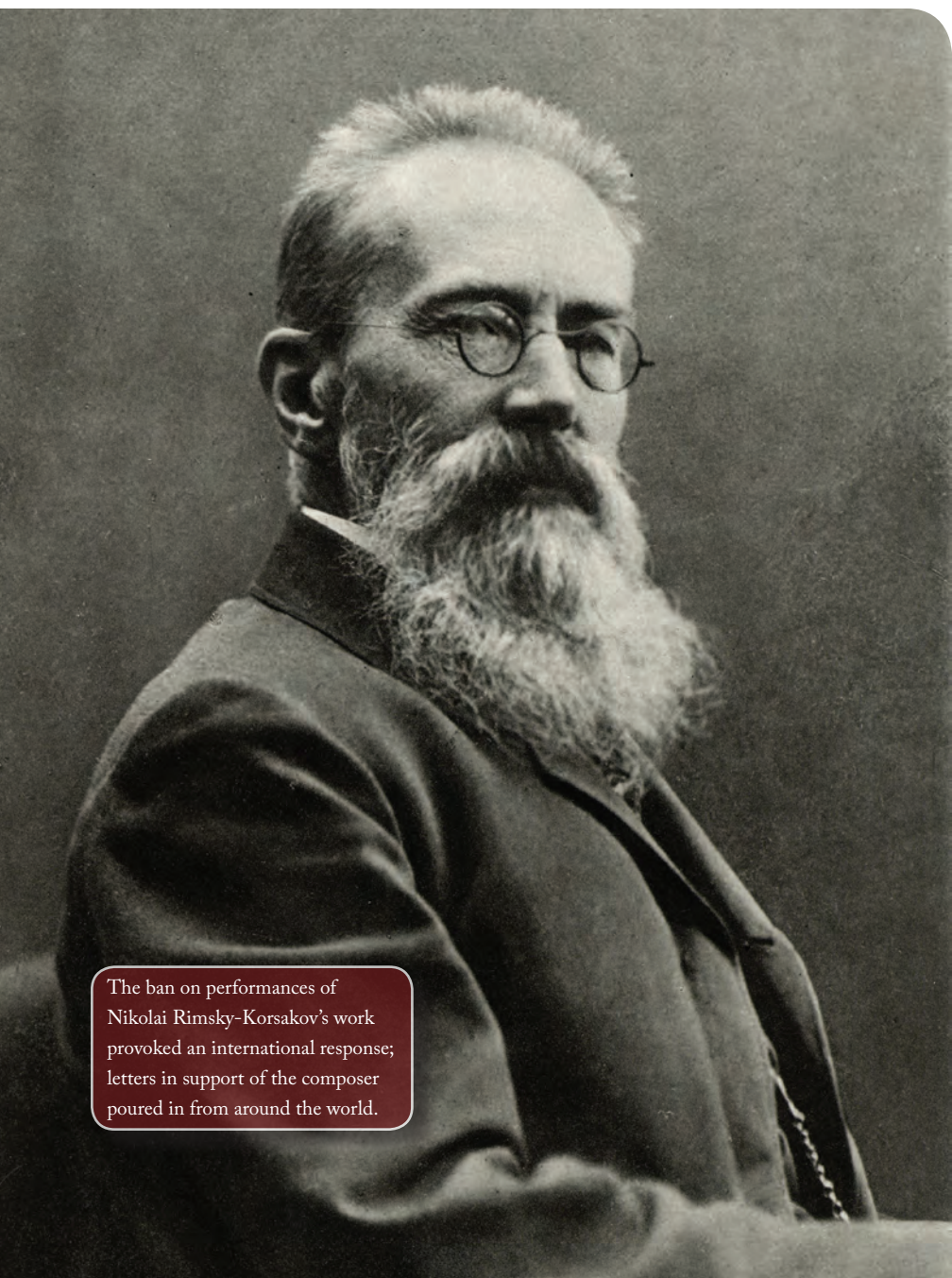
The catalyst for revolution on the home front was the obliteration of the Russian Far East Fleet and the surrender of Port Arthur; the majority of the Russian people no longer believed in the tsar, his government, or his military.

between 200 and 1,000 of the marchers. The events of Bloody Sunday began the active phase of the first Russian Revolution.

- General strikes were declared across the empire. On January 26, 80 strikers were killed in Riga; in Warsaw, 100 strikers were killed. By February, the strikes had reached the Caucasus; by April, the Urals and beyond.
- The military was affected, as well. The destruction of the Far East and Baltic fleets provoked mutinies across the empire. More than 2,000 sailors were killed in the process of putting down these revolts.
- The tsar and his government were shaken to the core. Sweeping reforms were offered that satisfied all but the most extreme revolutionaries, and the revolution petered out.

Rimsky-Korsakov's Reaction

- Along with students across the empire, those at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where Rimsky-Korsakov taught, demanded political reform and a constitutional monarchy. The administration threatened to shut down the conservatory. Rimsky-Korsakov threw his support behind the students.
- On March 19, 1905, the 61-year-old Rimsky-Korsakov was fired, and a few days after that, the police banned performances of his music. More than 300 conservatory students and several key faculty members walked out in support of the composer. In December 1905, Rimsky-Korsakov was reinstated. He was not mollified, however, and he retired permanently a few months later.
- Rimsky-Korsakov had told everyone that his opera *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya* was his last. But having left the conservatory, current events inspired him to compose one more: *The Golden Cockerel*. Its principal character is a clueless, doddering autocrat named Tsar Dodon, which literally means “Tsar Dodo.”

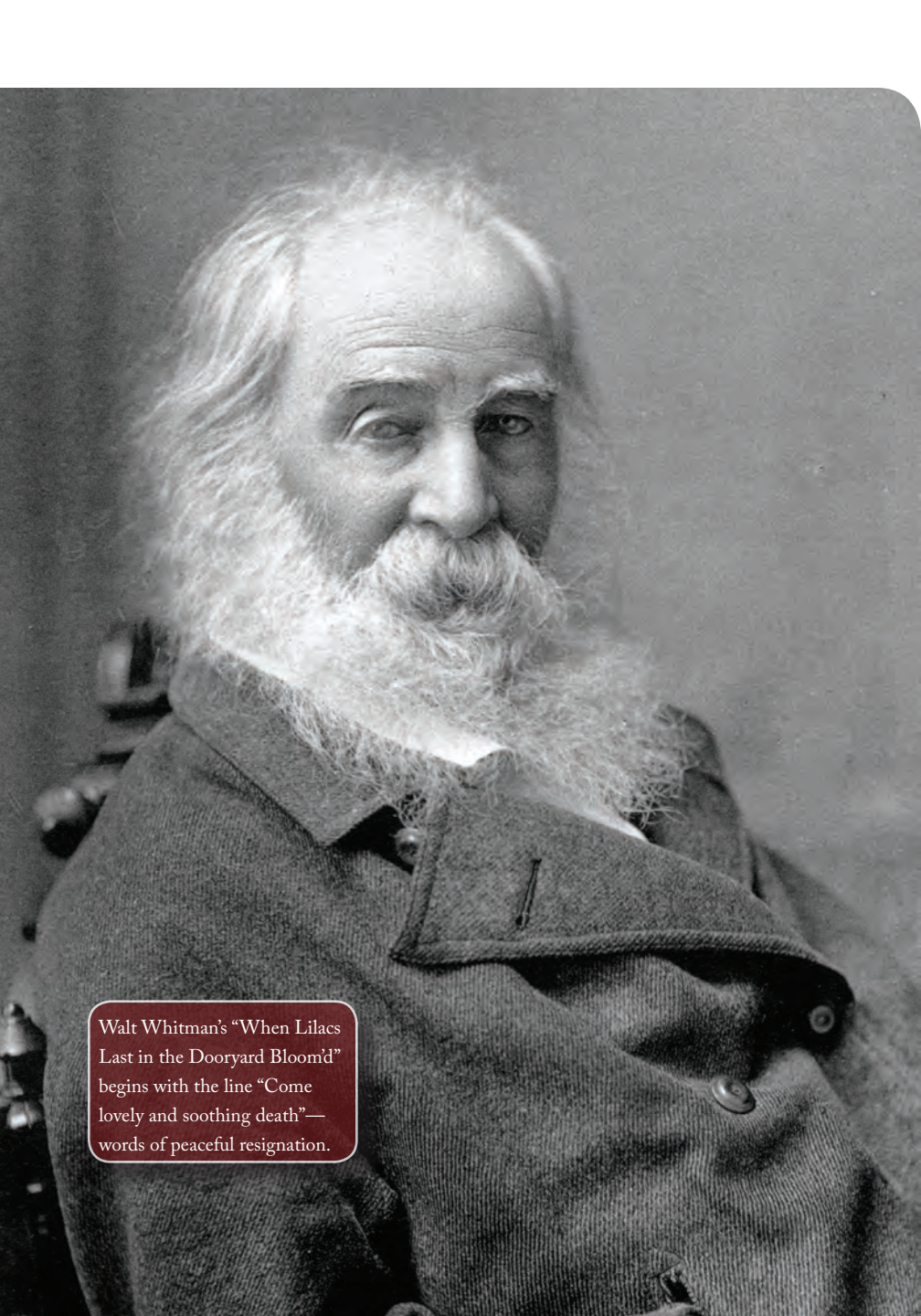


The ban on performances of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's work provoked an international response; letters in support of the composer poured in from around the world.

In Western Europe, the fighting of World War I began on August 2, 1914, when Germany occupied Luxembourg, then invaded Belgium. The German battle plan was to envelop the French army in a pincer, and it almost worked. But the French and British opened up a 30-mile gap between two German armies, which then retreated northward and dug in. The battles that stopped the German advance came to be known as the Miracle on the Marne, but for the participants, there was nothing miraculous about it. The British Expeditionary Force was essentially destroyed, and it would take England some 20 months to once again field an army large enough to make a difference on the western front.

Gustav Holst

- At the time that World War I broke out, Gustav Theodore Holst was the director of music at the St. Paul's Girls' School in west London.
- Although he was nearly 40 years old, Holst immediately volunteered for military service. He was mortified when he was rejected on medical grounds. But if he couldn't fight, he could at least compose.
- Among his most personal and haunting works is one he wrote in August 1919. Entitled *Ode to Death* and set for chorus and orchestra, the work was motivated by the waste and futility of war and dedicated to the memory of his friends and colleagues who had died in battle. The text is by the American poet Walt Whitman. The words are exquisitely calm and accepting. Holst's setting of these words is likewise luminous and mysterious.



Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs
Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"
begins with the line "Come
lovely and soothing death"—
words of peaceful resignation.

The Somme and the English War Experience

- On July 1, 1916, at 7:30 a.m., after a week-long Allied bombardment, 11 British divisions—some 110,000 men—climbed out of their trenches along a 13-mile-wide front and began advancing forward in a series of waves.
- The 6 German divisions facing them had spent the bombardment harbored deep underground. Within a minute of the end, they carried their machine guns topside and opened fire on their attackers. The young English troops were mowed down like grass.
- The disaster was in part the result of dismal military intelligence: Neither the British commander nor any of his staff or planners had an inkling that the German dugouts were as deep as they were and that the German machine gunners could get into position as quickly as they did.
- Further, the British attack plan displayed an unbelievable lack of imagination. Why attack in full daylight? Why not attack using a creeping barrage, in which the attacking infantry would follow the artillery as it slowly moved toward the German lines? Why not stop the artillery barrage for two minutes, then resume, thus catching the defenders out in the open?
- Strong arguments have been made that for all its horrors, the Somme offensive taught the Allies how to wage mass industrial warfare by coordinating their assets: artillery, air power, armor, and infantry. It has also been observed that in a war of attrition, it was necessary for the Allies—who could field many more soldiers—to take the war to the Germans.
 - It is also true that over the four months of the offensive, the Germans lost more irreplaceable frontline troops than did the Allies.
 - But the cost was horrific. On July 1, 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, the British alone suffered 57,470 casualties—19,240 of whom were killed outright.

- For the English, this “sacrifice of the innocents,” which was repeated at numerous other battles, led to a loss of national innocence. This loss found its outlet in poetry to a degree unique in the history of Western warfare.
- The conflict between traditional English values and the brutal, pitiless modernity of 20th-century warfare created an ironic edge that seemed to find its best description in poetry. Many of the English war poets died in action, among them Edward Thomas, Isaac Rosenberg, Charles Sorley, John McCrae, and Wilfred Owen. Others, including Ivor Gurney, Robert Graves, and Siegfried Sassoon, survived, though they were forever scarred by their wartime experiences.
- Perhaps the most powerful are the poems that address what came to be called the Big Lie, a lie expressed in a Latin verse by the Roman poet Horace that every English schoolboy knew by heart: *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*: “It is sweet and right to die for your country.”
- Holst’s text for *Ode to Death* is drawn from Walt Whitman’s poem “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d.” The poem was written in the summer of 1865; it is an elegy to President Abraham Lincoln, who had been shot on the evening of April 14, 1865. Whitman’s poem is also a requiem for all the dead of the American Civil War, which had ended just days before Lincoln’s assassination.
- After the opening of *Ode to Death*, Holst sets the following lines dramatically but not hysterically:

Prais’d be the fathomless universe,
 For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
 And for love, sweet love—but praise! Praise! Praise!
 For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.
- The dominant impression here is one of irony, as the chorus mockingly intones, “Praise! Praise! Praise!”



Gustav Holst's *Ode to Death* exhibits the same carefully contained rage as the greatest of the English war poets.

Beginning of World War I

- World War I was triggered by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, on June 28, 1914. The killing took place in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. From the beginning, Serbia was suspected—rightly, as it turned out—of being behind the assassination. Serbia was the growing power in the Balkan region, and with the support of Russia, the Serbian government was intent on creating a greater Slavic homeland out of the formerly Ottoman lands of the Balkan Peninsula.
 - For the Serbians, those lands included Bosnia, which had been annexed by Austria in 1908.
 - For itself, Russia had its eyes on Constantinople, the capital city of the ever-weakening Ottoman Empire and, with it, the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, the so-called Turkish Straits or Black Sea Straits. Russian acquisition of the straits would guarantee it all-weather access to the Mediterranean and to foreign markets worldwide.
- In October 1912, Russia's foreign minister, Sergei Sazonov, spelled out Russia's intentions regarding Constantinople in a lengthy memorandum. According to Sazonov, Russia—still smarting from its defeat to Japan in 1905—could regain its lost prestige and change the geopolitical map of Europe and the Middle East by conquering Constantinople.
- The traditional explanation for Russia's entry into World War I was its desire to protect Serbia from Austria. But in truth, the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand by Serbian operatives was intended as a provocation—an attempt to start a third Balkan war in as many years.
 - According to Russian strategists, Austria would have no choice but to launch a punitive attack on Serbia, which would provide Russia with a pretext for going to war with Austria.
 - If Germany chose to honor its treaties with Austria and threaten Russia, France and England would be compelled to honor their treaties with Russia against Germany.

- Again, according to Russian planners, France and England would neutralize Germany, leaving Russia free to demolish Austria-Hungary and partition the Ottoman Empire.
- Unfortunately, the plan didn't work, and the conflagration that was unleashed destroyed the German, Austrian, Ottoman, and Russian empires.

Blame for World War I

- That Germany “started” World War I by itself is one of the enduring myths of the war, but as we’ve just noted, much of the blame for World War I rests with Russia.
- Another myth of World War I is that it didn’t have to happen. This view is summed up by the title of Christopher Clark’s book *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*. “The sleepwalkers” refers to those European leaders who, presumably, wandered unconsciously into war.
- This view, however, doesn’t seem convincing. The world didn’t go to war because its leaders were asleep on the job; it went to war because the leadership did not truly understand that 20th-century technology and geopolitical reality had rendered 19th-century concepts of land grabs, diplomacy, and military action obsolete.
- Like the medieval kingdoms from which they had evolved, the majority of the dynastic monarchies in Europe concentrated too much power in too few hands, while the bureaucracies below slowly implemented decisions made from above. In addition, Great Power diplomacy, which saw each power formulate policy independent of others, encouraged distrust even among allies, and it required time. In the month that followed the assassination in Sarajevo, Euro-diplomacy could not keep up with events as they unfolded.
- The crisis reached its head on July 23, 1914, when Austria-Hungary—in collusion with Germany—delivered to Serbia what is now known as

the July Ultimatum—10 demands that were calculated to force Serbia into war with Austria.

- Of the 10 demands, numbers 5 and 6 were considered—at the time—to be the most irreconcilable with Serbian sovereignty.
- Point 5 demanded that Serbia cooperate with Austria-Hungary in suppressing organizations hostile to Austria-Hungary, and point 6 insisted that Austria-Hungary participate in the official investigation of the assassination.
- The biggest problem with the ultimatum was that for all its denials, Serbia was culpable for the murders in Sarajevo. Austria, in collusion with its ally Germany, drew up the ultimatum knowing that Serbia could not accept it. To no one's surprise, Serbia did indeed reject the ultimatum.
- On July 28, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. One after the other, treaty obligations forced other nations into declarations of war. Austria expected to quickly crush the Serbians. Russia expected to quickly crush the Austrians and the Ottoman Turks. Germany expected to quickly humble France, then turn its full might against Russia. England expected to use its navy to blockade Germany and, thus, obviate the need to put significant numbers of English boots on the ground. Every one of the belligerents expected the war to be over by Christmas.
- World War I was a confrontation between the old and the new, between the past and the present. It was a confrontation that had been brewing since 1648, when the Peace of Westphalia that concluded the Thirty Years' War created sovereign nation-states beholden only to their own self-interests; a confrontation that had been brewing as a result of the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century and made almost inevitable by the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century.
- The technology of war had advanced exponentially, while diplomacy, military tactics, and strategic thinking had not. The rulers of Europe were still thinking as they had thought 100 years before, during the Napoleonic era, when relatively small, relatively lightly armed troops

fought for a week or even a month, until an outcome was achieved and treaties were signed.

The Conclusion of *Ode to Death*

- The final verse of Holst's *Ode to Death* sets this stanza by Whitman:
Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the
Myriad fields and prairies wide,
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the
Teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee O
Death.
- Holst's setting of this final verse takes a double cue from the first line of Whitman's stanza. The first cue is the word *float*. Holst creates here a musical sense of floating by using a progression of relatively consonant though unrelated harmonies. Because they are unrelated—meaning that each one implies a different key area—there is no sense of tonal centricity and, therefore, no sense of tonal gravity. Thus, the music seems to float.
- The second musical cue Holst takes from Whitman's line is the word *song*. Holst sets this final stanza of poetry as a serenade-like song, with a strumming, guitar-like accompaniment in the harp and a steady beat.
- This is heartbreaking music, made so by its gentle, quiet sweetness. There is no rage here. Neither is there any intimation of the unspeakable violence that has brought about death nor any patriotic message that would offer consolation in the face of death.
- It is music that leaves us with no emotional refuge with which to legitimize or rationalize the cause of death. We are left only with the impressions of passing into a place unknowable and of terrible waste, a perfect metaphor for World War I itself.

Berg: *Wozzeck* (1922)

Lecture
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Johann Franz Wozzeck, the title character and protagonist of Alban Berg's opera, is a 37-year-old militia man. He is also slowly going insane, something we become aware of early in the first act, when he begins to hallucinate. The disconcerting scene ends with Wozzeck's words: "Still, all is still, and all the world is dead." Composed during and after World War I, this scene reflects not just the damaged mind of Wozzeck but also that of a doomed generation. According to musicologist Glenn Watkins, "This scene is as vivid a projection of impending world doom as any to come out of the Great War."

The Case of Johann Christian Woyzeck

- On August 24, 1821, a Leipzig-based anatomist and surgeon named Johann August Clarus was asked to report on the mental condition of a confessed murderer named Johann Christian Woyzeck. The 41-year-old Woyzeck was a Leipzig-born wigmaker and barber who had enlisted in the army. He had been living with a widow named Johanna Christiane Woost.
- Woyzeck had killed Christiane in a fit of jealous rage, and the Leipzig court wanted Dr. Clarus to determine whether Woyzeck was of sound mind when he committed the murder. Dr. Clarus determined that Woyzeck was indeed accountable for his actions, despite the fact that he suffered from hallucinations. His reports on Woyzeck were published in book form.
- Woyzeck was guillotined on August 27, 1824. Both he and Dr. Clarus's book would likely have been forgotten forever had the book not been discovered by a young medical student named Karl Georg Büchner.

An aspiring playwright, Büchner used Dr. Clarus's book as the basis for a play entitled *Woyzeck*. But Büchner died in 1837, leaving *Woyzeck* unfinished. Over the years, the play has been "finished" by a number of authors and editors, becoming one of the most popular and influential plays in the German theatrical repertoire.

Synopsis of *Wozzeck*

- Franz Wozzeck is an insignificant, impoverished, inarticulate common soldier garrisoned in a German town. He lives with a woman named Marie, who is the mother of an illegitimate child. Wozzeck is tormented by the captain he serves and abused by a sadistic doctor. He is an everyman/antihero, being driven mad by everyone around him.
- Bored with Wozzeck, Marie has an affair with a handsome drum major, who beats up Wozzeck when confronted. Humiliated and bloodied, driven by hallucinations and jealousy, Wozzeck kills Marie and, in most versions of the story, drowns himself.
- Both Büchner's play and Berg's opera offer up a vision of a violent, oppressive, irrational world populated with violent, oppressive, predatory people, a world in which only Wozzeck—for all his hallucinatory, homicidal rage—is sane by comparison.

Alban Berg

- Alban Berg was born in Vienna on February 9, 1885. At the age of 19, he began composition lessons with the Viennese modernist Arnold Schoenberg. In just seven years, Berg went from knowing next to nothing about the technical workings of music to being one of the most technically polished and brilliantly original composers of all time.
- Berg's originality was rooted in his adaptation of the ultra-modernist musical dogma of Schoenberg to his own artistic needs.
 - Schoenberg's music was based on a single belief: that all music sprang from the voice and, therefore, from melody. To that end,

Schoenberg set out to create a musical syntax based entirely on melody and melodic variation, development, and metamorphosis.

- He rejected traditional tonal harmony as an artificial construct that did nothing but constrain melody. He rejected the traditional concepts of consonance and dissonance as antithetical to free melodic development. Schoenberg called his musical revolution the “emancipation of dissonance,” but it was really the emancipation of melody.
- What makes Berg’s music so special is the manner in which he absorbed Schoenberg’s concepts without abandoning the lyric aesthetic of Viennese music and without abandoning—entirely—tonal harmony. Berg’s music acknowledges the past as it simultaneously looks to the future.

Berg’s *Wozzeck*

- On May 5, 1914, the 29-year-old Berg attended the first Viennese performance of Büchner’s *Woyzeck*. He immediately decided to turn it into an opera, but shortly thereafter, World War I began, changing Berg’s view on the meaning and substance of the play.
- Berg was called up into the Austro-Hungarian army on August 15, 1915. He never saw combat but, instead, served behind the lines. His military experience alternated drudgery and boredom with manic activity, all of it enforced by arbitrary or even degrading discipline. Berg’s army life left him with an understanding of the random, ego-destroying tyranny of the military and supplied him with various experiences that found their way into *Wozzeck*.
- Because of his service, Berg didn’t return to composing *Wozzeck* until 1917, and he didn’t finish it until 1922. That five-year period saw the war end and the casualties totaled up; it saw the treaties signed and the German and Austro-Hungarian empires broken up; and it saw communist revolutions break out in Germany and Austria. Such events profoundly affected the composition of *Wozzeck*.

- World War I lasted from July 28, 1914, to November 11, 1918. During that period, of 65 million men mobilized, casualties—men killed, wounded, taken prisoner, or missing—totaled 37 million. At least 7 million civilians died, as well. The war represented an unprecedented descent into barbarity, causing many to question and even lose faith in the basic civility of modern humanity.

The War That Never Ended

- Numerous explanations have been offered for the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party in the 1920s and early 1930s.
 - Chief among those was the botched Treaty of Versailles that ended the war between Germany and the Allied powers. But it wasn't the peace that unleashed the dual catastrophes of fascism and Bolshevism; it was the war itself.
 - The war desensitized—in some cases, dehumanized—a generation of young European men. The victors had, at least, the satisfaction of knowing that their cause had prevailed. But the losers—Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Turkey—could take solace in nothing. Communist revolutions broke out in Russia, Germany, and Austria; the revolution in Russia succeeded, while the ones in Germany and Austria were crushed.
- The Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, five years after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Many forward-looking thinkers, including the English economist John Maynard Keynes, understood at the time that the treaty was too harsh and would be counterproductive in the long run.
- At the core of the problem with the treaty was Article 231, the so-called war guilt article. The article read: "The Allied Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies."

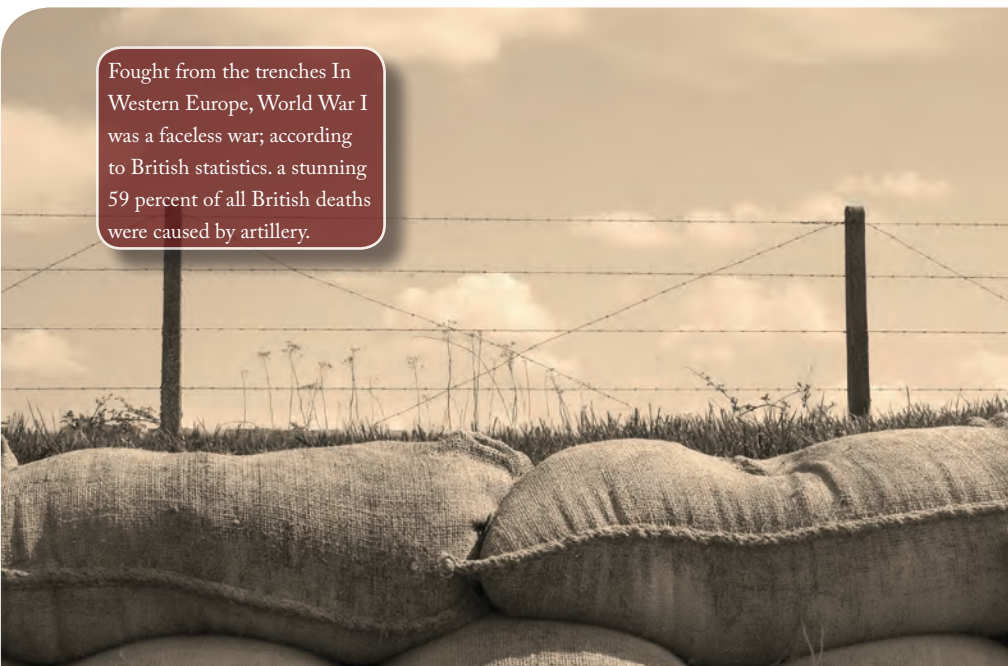
- The authors of this article intended it as legal justification for the ruinous war indemnity that was billed to Germany. For the Germans, Article 231 was a national humiliation; coupled with the reparations, territorial concessions, and disarmament, the Versailles Treaty neither reconciled Germany with the Allies nor pacified what was still a largely military society.
- It's important to note that German propaganda had not prepared the German people for defeat. Those military and political leaders who were responsible for the defeat claimed that Germany—"undefeated in the field"—had been stabbed in the back by left-wing politicians, communists, and Jews.
- For the victors, the armistice marked the end of the nightmare. But for Germans and Austrians, the end of the war brought a new nightmare: revolution. The Bolsheviks, having consolidated their power in Russia, were now actively fomenting revolution across Central Europe. Working-class revolutionary groups attempted to seize power in Berlin, Warsaw, Vienna, and elsewhere.
- As it turned out, the counterrevolutionary right was much too strong for the revolutionaries. Soldiers returning from the front were organized into Freikorps, right-wing paramilitary units aimed at crushing the revolutionary movements. The members of the Freikorps were to become the backbone of Hitler's support as he rose to prominence in the 1920s.

Hypocrisy

- World War I rendered many longstanding beliefs about chivalry, fair play, honor, glory, and heroism obsolete. It was a faceless war, during which combatants rarely if ever saw who they were fighting. For the millions trapped in the trenches, such abstractions as patriotism and national duty gave way to the realities of brutality, disillusionment, and hypocrisy.

- Neutral Belgium continues to this day to be portrayed as a victim, an innocent nation that stood up against the German war machine and paid the price in blood and occupation. But Belgium's actions in its colonies were anything but innocent. In the decades before World War I, Belgian authorities were responsible for the enslavement, mutilation, and slaughter of some 10 million human beings in the Congo in their pursuit of rubber, copper, gold, and diamonds.
- England and France both claimed that they were fighting in defense of democracy, but as was noted at the time, democracy was not observed in either their colonies or by their ally Russia.
- America's entry into the war in 1917 was presumably intended to make the world safe for democracy. But in fact, America's entry was primarily about protecting its investments. U.S. financial institutions and industry had provided Britain and France with billions of dollars in cash, credit, and materiel. By 1917, Britain and France were broke, and defeat would have meant default. Thus, when Germany lifted all restrictions on submarine warfare in 1917, the hawks in the business community were more than prepared to make the world safe for the American dollar.

Fought from the trenches in Western Europe, World War I was a faceless war; according to British statistics, a stunning 59 percent of all British deaths were caused by artillery.



- When it came to leadership during World War I, there were no innocents.
- Austria-Hungary had started the war by attacking Serbia. Germany declared its support of Austria, then attacked Luxembourg, Belgium, and France. Russia, believing the moment had come to vivisect the remnants of the Ottoman Empire, declared its support of its fellow Slavs in Serbia, invaded Austria-Hungary, and prepared to do battle with Germany.
- France entered, declaring its allegiance to Belgium and Russia, and England entered, declaring its support of Belgium and France. Within a few days, the European peace that had generally held since 1815 unraveled entirely.
- Within a few months, the war had become a brutal stalemate. The issue of whoever started it became irrelevant as the belligerents were all faced with the same choice: Continue to sacrifice men by the millions or negotiate a settlement. But not a single belligerent nation was willing to admit to the futility of it all; thus, the war continued.

Wozzeck: The Dance of Death

- Without doubt, the indignities of Berg's military experience influenced his portrayal of Wozzeck. But, as Christopher Hailey, wrote, "far more important is the evidence this opera provides for Berg's capacity for empathy, for reaching across the chasms of circumstance toward those common bonds of humanity."
- Berg's empathy for Wozzeck becomes viscerally powerful during the climactic scene of the opera: the nightmarish dance-of-death episode, during which Wozzeck's madness finally becomes apparent to everyone.
- In this scene, Wozzeck stumbles into a bar, his hands and arms covered in Marie's blood. In the bar, Marie's friend "Margret and young men are dancing a wild, rapid polka." As Wozzeck enters, a bizarre piano polka creates a grotesque, distorted, almost cubist environment. We are

hearing Wozzeck's mind, in which the planes of reality have become skewed and disconnected.

- Wozzeck then dances a few steps with Margret before sitting at a table and pulling her into his lap. Margret, assuming that Wozzeck is drunk, sings a distorted, twisted song. It finally begins to dawn on Margret that something is wrong with Wozzeck. She points out that his hands are covered in blood, and Wozzeck is stunned. Speaking more to himself than anyone else he asks, “Am I a murderer?”
- Wozzeck runs into the forest, where he wades into a deep pool of water, thinking to wash himself clean of Marie's blood. But he simply keeps walking until he disappears under the water and drowns.
- Driven mad by forces he cannot control or even understand, Wozzeck killed the two most vulnerable characters in the opera: Marie and himself. As for those whose actions drove Wozzeck mad—the captain, the doctor, and the drum major—there are no repercussions. We suspect that they will hardly even notice Wozzeck's absence.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 13 (1962)

Lecture
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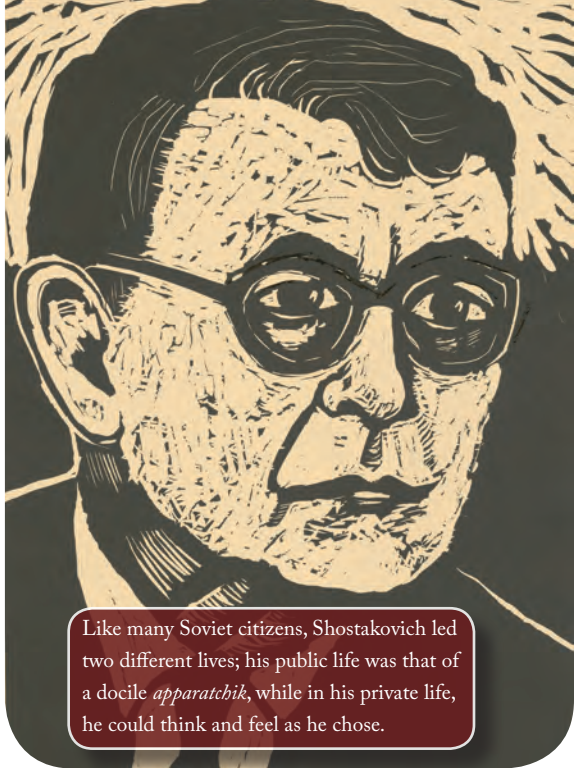
Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich was born on September 25, 1906, in St. Petersburg, which was then the capital city of the Russian Empire. He died on August 9, 1975, in Moscow, the capital city of the Soviet Union. He was a witness to the birth of the Soviet Union and subsequently lived in an environment that Westerners can hardly imagine. Like so many artists in the Soviet Union, Shostakovich publically said that his work meant one thing while privately acknowledging that it meant something else. At the heart of Shostakovich's secret expressive language were satire and irony, with which the fifth movement of his Symphony no. 13 veritably oozes.

Shostakovich as a Careerist

- Shostakovich's Symphony no. 13 is a setting of a poem by the Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko. The poem, entitled "Career," begins by telling the story of Galileo, who the Catholic clergy claimed to be both wicked and senseless.
 - The poem acknowledges that Galileo was senseless by insisting that the earth revolved around the sun. In contrast, a colleague of his, who sought to advance his career, betrayed Galileo and denied what he knew to be true.
 - As the poem trenchantly observes, instead of "advancing" his career, the turncoat destroyed it. As for Galileo, by facing the risk alone, he achieved true greatness.
- In the poem, Galileo is the poet, composer, playwright, author, and painter—the Soviet artist who had to walk the fine line between speaking the truth and personal obliteration. Those who lied, cheated,

and betrayed others to get ahead were known in the Soviet world as careerists.

- It is ironic that some Western observers still claim that Dmitri Shostakovich was the ultimate careerist. Their evidence is his public actions: the anti-Western articles and speeches attributed to him; the fact that he toed the party line whenever he was required to; that he abased and humiliated himself in 1936 and 1948 to survive life-threatening purges; and that he joined the Communist Party in 1960 after having sworn that he would never do so.
- But Shostakovich was no careerist; he was a survivor who somehow managed to die of natural causes at home rather than by a bullet to the neck at Lubyanka Prison or frozen to death in the wastes of the Gulag.



Like many Soviet citizens, Shostakovich led two different lives; his public life was that of a docile *apparatchik*, while in his private life, he could think and feel as he chose.

The Thaw

- Shostakovich's Symphony no. 13 occupies a most interesting place in his output. It was composed during a period called the thaw that spanned the years 1956 to 1964: from the denunciation and repudiation of the recently deceased Joseph Stalin by Communist Party Secretary Nikita Khrushchev in 1956 to Khrushchev's ouster in 1964.

- Joseph Stalin came to power in 1924 and remained the Soviet dictator until his death in 1953. He was a butcher who was responsible for the deaths of 50 million people—excluding war deaths—during his regime. Stalin could not have done it alone, however, and he surrounded himself with a cadre of ruthless goons and henchmen disguised as government officials.
- Among those henchmen was Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev. He was a short, round, peasant-born operative who did what he was told to do, which included serving as executioner. But he had a spark of greatness in him, a spark that compelled him to seek redress for the evils of Stalinism once he himself had come to power. Under Khrushchev, domestic repression and censorship were scaled back, and more than 1 million nonpolitical and political prisoners were released from the Gulag.
- Despite his proclaimed desire to pursue peaceful coexistence with the rest of the world, Khrushchev's tenure was marked by one crisis after another: the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. He was frightening to the West, yet for someone who had been part of Stalin's inner circle, he was shockingly liberal.
- When he was forced out of government in 1964 and the hardliners took back over, Khrushchev's reforms were rescinded. But they were not forgotten, and the thaw initiated an irreversible psychological change in the Soviet Union.

Shostakovich's Symphony No. 13

- Shostakovich composed his Symphony no. 13 in 1962. As mentioned, its five movements set to music five poems by Yevgeny Yevtushenko. The poems and the symphony were written during the most liberal period of the thaw; nevertheless, they were still extremely controversial.

- The poem that brought Yevtushenko to Shostakovich's attention and gave the symphony its nickname is entitled "Babi Yar."
 - Babi Yar is a ravine on the outskirts of the Ukrainian capital of Kiev, where between 100,000 and 150,000 men, women, and children—mostly Jews—were slaughtered between 1941 and 1943.
 - In 1961, when "Babi Yar" was published, the Soviet government did not officially recognize the Holocaust as ever having taken place. Yevtushenko's poem—which is an indictment of both Soviet anti-Semitism and Nazi brutality—created a sensation.
- The manner of Shostakovich's orchestration instills his Thirteenth Symphony with a sort of Russian timelessness. The symphony is scored for a large orchestra, bells, a solo bass singer, and a choir of basses.
 - The bells create a powerfully Russian timbral sensibility—one that evokes the Orthodox Church and a sense of spiritual timelessness.
 - The bass singers redouble that Russian sensibility; the deep male voices again call to mind the Orthodox Church, as well as the powerful, raw, masculine earthiness that we stereotypically associate with Russian music.
- The first verse of the first movement states that although no memorial stands at Babi Yar, the ravine itself is nothing less than a crude tombstone, one that inspires a terrible, ancient fear, as old as the Jewish people themselves.

Russia Revisited

- The nonstop expansion of the Russian Empire was a response to the nation's endless border problems. Every time Russia expanded to pacify an area, it was exposed to attack from enemies living on the other side of its new borders. By 1900, Russia's size had rendered it largely defenseless. In the west, Russian Poland was virtually indefensible should Germany or Austro-Hungary attack. If Poland fell, the Russians knew that they could say goodbye to both their influence in the Balkans and their ambitions to dismantle the Ottoman Empire.

- Russia's defeat at the hands of the Japanese almost brought down the Romanov dynasty and forced the tsar to accept the humiliating presence of an elected parliament. At the same time, German power and influence continued to grow, even as the Austrian and Ottoman empires appeared ever weaker.
- Increasingly, Russian planners saw war—a war on Russian terms—as being the solution to all their problems. A defeated and chastened Germany would cease to be a threat; the Austrian and Ottoman empires could be dismantled, and more stable borders achieved; Russia could have its historically coveted warm-water port and would reestablish its power and prestige. As early as 1912, the Russian general staff had come up with a strategy for mobilizing Russian troops without setting off alarm bells across Western Europe.
- The Russian military acquitted itself poorly during the first two years of World War I. A few early successes against the Austrians were followed by a series of defeats at the hands of the Germans. The situation got so bad that on September 5, 1915, Tsar Nicholas II appointed himself commander-in-chief of the Russian military. From that point on, the Russian army's failures and incompetence were blamed directly on the tsar.
- Those failures came home in March 1917, when strikes, food riots, demonstrations, and mutinies broke out in the capital city of St. Petersburg (Petrograd). On March 15, the tsar abdicated, and on the following day a provisional government was formed. But it was too little, too late, and on November 8, 1917, the Bolshevik Party, led by Vladimir Lenin, took over Petrograd. Within a couple of days, they had taken over the Russian government.
- On March 8, 1918, five days after having withdrawn from World War I, the Bolshevik Party changed its name to the Communist Party. Tsar Nicholas II and his family were murdered four months later, on July 17, 1918.

According to Khrushchev, anyone who didn't agree with Stalin was “an enemy of the people.”



- Fourteen months after that—in September 1919—the 13-year-old Dmitri Shostakovich was enrolled in the Petrograd Conservatory. Even as Shostakovich attended classes, events were unfolding that would shape the rest of his life.
 - Shostakovich was 15 years old when, on April 3, 1922, Joseph Stalin was appointed general secretary of the Communist Party. He was 17 when, on January 21, 1924, Vladimir Lenin died.
 - In 1925, Shostakovich was 18 years old and working on his first symphony when Stalin was in the process of dividing, isolating, and destroying anyone who opposed him.
- By 1927, Stalin was the all-powerful dictator of the Soviet Union. He achieved this by presenting himself as the one thing the Russian masses craved most: a savior. But he was no savior, and the human cost of his failures and successes in the name of progress beggar the imagination.
- In 1928, Stalin announced his first five-year plan. It called for centralized economic planning, nationalization of all business and industry, and agricultural collectivization. Collectivization, in particular, was a human and agricultural catastrophe.
- Even as events unfolded in the countryside, waves of repression and arrests were visited on the military, on industry, and in the cities. Writers, poets, journalists, playwrights, actors, politicians, and bureaucrats disappeared—anyone who might possibly criticize Stalin or his policies. Anyone could—at any point—become an enemy of the state.
- Shostakovich's turn came on January 28, 1936, when an unsigned editorial in *Pravda*—reportedly dictated by Stalin himself—condemned Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* as being obscene and antirevolutionary. The 29-year-old Shostakovich instantly became an outcast and lived in fear for the rest of his life.

- At Shostakovich's request, Yevtushenko wrote a poem called "Fears." The poem is a rumination on the fears of the Stalinist past and an appreciation of the less fearful present. Shostakovich's setting of the poem is brilliant. A low, rumbling, quivering orchestral introduction sets a dark, foreboding mood. When the voices enter, they are quiet, furtive, like the "ghosts of yesteryear" they describe.

The Thaw Revisited

- Joseph Stalin died on March 5, 1953, and the power struggle began immediately. It took two years, but in the end, Nikita Khrushchev emerged victorious.
- Khrushchev's famous secret speech was delivered at the 20th Party Congress in February 1956. In it, Stalin was portrayed as being "savage, half-mad and power-crazed." In the four hours it took Khrushchev to deliver the speech, he demolished Stalin's reputation.
- The ensuing thaw reached its climax with the publication in November 1962 of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and the premiere of Shostakovich's Symphony no. 13 in December 1962. The Soviet authorities did everything they could to undermine the symphony's premiere, and it was banned outright after its second performance, but it had been heard, and its impact would not be forgotten.
- Sadly, the thaw was not to last. By 1964, Khrushchev's failures had earned him many more enemies than friends. On October 12, 1964, he was denounced for his failed policies.

Timing of the Thirteenth Symphony

- Shostakovich's Thirteenth Symphony could only have been composed when it was composed. It could not have been written 10 years earlier; Stalin and his people would have seen to it that Shostakovich disappeared. Neither could it have been composed 10 years later;

Brezhnev and his people would have seen to it that Shostakovich suffered an “accident” of some unspecified nature.

- What makes Shostakovich’s Symphony no. 13 truly special is that thanks to the thaw, he didn’t have to hide its true meaning: He used Yevtushenko’s poetry to openly and explicitly express himself.
- Taken all together, Symphony no. 13 is nothing less than a retrospective on the failures of Soviet communism. Its first movement, “Babi Yar,” is a condemnation of Soviet anti-Semitism. Its second movement—“Humor”—is an affirmation that humor is, in the end, greater and more powerful than any temporal power. The poem observes that although all the great rulers of the world could command armies, they could never command humor. Shostakovich’s musical setting of the second movement is as rollicking, infectious, and defiant as humor itself.
- The third movement, “In the Store,” is in praise of Russian women, who somehow managed to endure: to feed and clothe and support their families in the face of endemic want. The fourth movement is “Fear,” and the fifth is about the amoral careerism central to the communist bureaucracy. The symphony concludes whimsically, ironically, and quietly.

Copland: Symphony No. 3 (1946)

Aaron Copland is the most famous and beloved American composer of the 20th century. Copland is best known for the accessible, populist works he composed in the 1930s and 1940s, including the ballets *Billy the Kid*, *Appalachian Spring*, and *Rodeo*; the *Fanfare for the Common Man*; and his Symphony no. 3. In the same way that the music of Joseph Haydn came to personify what we today consider the Viennese classical style, so these populist works by Copland have come to personify a sort of archetypal American music. His lean angularity, spaciousness, directness of expression, and studied simplicity tapped directly into the American self-image.

Copland and the American Archetype

- Part of the American archetype found in the work of Aaron Copland has to do with his use of American folk songs in his ballets, the most famous example of which is his use of the Shaker hymn “Simple Gifts” in *Appalachian Spring*.
- But in fact, it’s not Copland’s occasional use of folk tunes and folk-like clichés that have caused his music to be identified as being stereotypically American; rather, it’s his melodic sensibility and—in his populist works—his harmonic usage.
- For example, Copland based the fourth movement of his Symphony no. 3 of 1946 on his *Fanfare for the Common Man* of 1942. Typical of Copland’s thematic melodies, this one is exceedingly disjunct, which means that it is filled with leaps—wide-open melodic spaces.

- Copland harmonizes this melody not with complete chords (or *triads*) but, rather, primarily with *perfect intervals*—fourths and fifths—which give the harmonization a lean, stripped-down angularity. The harmonic underpinning implied here is excessively simple, consisting of just two alternating harmonies: a tonic chord and a subdominant chord.
- Like the disjunct thematic melody, Copland's harmonization creates a sense of wide-open space. This lean angularity, this spaciousness, this directness of expression and studied simplicity tapped directly into the American self-image.
- The great American myth tells us that the United States is the land of opportunity, urban dynamism, and open space, all informed by technical ingenuity and a can-do attitude. America is a nation characterized by a naïve, positive mentality devoid of the angst and tired cynicism of older European cultures.
- During the last years of the 19th century and the first years of the 20th, the American mainstream—masters of a newly settled, newly industrialized continent with seemingly unlimited resources—saw themselves as the chosen ones, destined to bring the American way to the world at large.
- Never before or since was this sense of American exceptionalism more powerfully felt than in the years immediately after World War II. It's true that there were dark clouds on America's horizon in 1946 and 1947, but that did not preclude the American self-image from reaching its apogee. The United States had emerged from the Great Depression as the arsenal of democracy. It had fought a "good war" and demolished evil regimes in Germany and Japan. American industrial might and economic power were unmatched, and unlike most of the belligerents, the American mainland was de facto unscathed by the war.



The archetypal American hero contrasted mightily with the haughty, feminized sophistication of the French or the humorless, goose-stepping militancy of the Germans.

Blessings of the Western Hemisphere

- Never was America's geographic location a greater asset than during World War II. Although the U.S. military paid a high price during World War II, by comparison to almost every other belligerent, the United States survived the war not just physically intact but economically, industrially, and geopolitically stronger than when the war began.
- The American self-image at the conclusion of the war was not that of a vanquished foe, like Germany and Japan; it was not that of an exhausted victor, like the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, China, and France; it was that of a winner in every sense of the word.
- Aaron Copland's Symphony no. 3 of 1946 is a heroic symphony that rides the crest of a series of great victories: over the Great Depression, over fascism and Japanese imperialism, and of the American spirit and the American way of life.

Background on Copland

- Copland's parents, Harris and Sarah, were Russian-born Jews who emigrated to the United States as children. They ran a successful department store in Brooklyn, New York, and were, according to Aaron, "impervious to music."
- Copland finished his musical education in France and returned to the United States in June 1924. He understood that to be an American composer meant writing music that somehow reflected and reconciled the diversity of American society. For Copland, that meant not just celebrating the spirit of the urban environment in which he grew up but absorbing the idiomatic elements of jazz and American and Latin American folk music.
- The masterwork of Copland's early career is his *Piano Variations* of 1930. The *Piano Variations* is a brilliant, energized, jagged, machine age-inspired, jazz-influenced modern masterpiece—the Manhattan skyline in musical action.
- Just a few years later, however, Copland was writing music that apparently rejected modernism. Copland was dismissed by many as a turncoat and a profiteer, someone who wrote what amounted to "movie music" to acquire fame and fortune.
 - Despite the fact that stylistically, Copland appeared to be a compositional chameleon, his basic compositional thinking never changed. From roughly the mid-1930s through the 1940s, he simplified his compositional syntax by cutting back on its dissonance level and by using more traditional, more consonant-sounding melodic and harmonic structures.
 - But his angular, disjunct melodies; his extraordinarily "thrifty" aesthetic; and his predilection for jazz-inspired rhythms and Stravinsky-inspired rhythmic asymmetry—all the elements that inform his most modernistic works—are also the basis of his most accessible populist works.

The Great Depression and the Rise of American Populism

- Between 1920 and September of 1929, the U.S. stock market experienced an unprecedented bull market. The Dow Jones Average increased tenfold in those years. In 1929, it was declared by economist Irving Fisher to be on “a permanently high plateau.”
- In reality, the American economy was in trouble: Steel production and car sales were down, construction was sluggish, and easy credit had led many American consumers and businesses to build up mountains of debt.
- The bubble burst on October 24, 1929—Black Thursday—when the market posted some \$5 billion in losses. President Hoover, government officials, and financial institutions did what they could to calm the public.
- However, on Monday, October 28, it became apparent that the pyramid was crumbling. The Dow fell 38 points that day. On October 29—Black Tuesday—panic set in, and the market fell another 33 points. On those two days, the market lost more than \$30 billion of its value.
- A shaken American public sought security in cash. But the banks didn't have enough cash on hand, and many simply closed their doors. As the money supply dried up, consumer spending dried up with it. Factories and stores scaled back or went out of business, all of which created unemployment. Taken together, the stock market crash and the depression that followed created a seemingly intractable downward financial spiral of stunning complexity.
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president on November 8, 1932. By the time he was inaugurated on March 4, 1933, more than 9,000 banks had gone out of business. Nearly 13 million American workers were unemployed. Farm prices had fallen by 60 percent since 1929 and industrial production by almost as much. More than 2 million Americans were homeless.

- Over the course of the next five years, the Roosevelt administration introduced a veritable mountain of programs and legislation that was collectively referred to as the New Deal.
- The largest and most ambitious New Deal project was the Works Progress Administration (WPA), whose primary mission was to hire the unemployed to carry out public works projects. It was created in 1935 with an initial appropriation of \$4.9 billion dollars. At its height in 1938, the WPA employed more than 3 million men and women. Over the course of its eight years of existence—from 1935 to 1943—it received \$13.4 billion in funding.
- Thanks largely to Mrs. Roosevelt, the arts were also funded through the WPA. Of the \$4.9 billion originally budgeted to the WPA, \$27 million was allotted to the Federal Arts Project, of which about \$7 million was used to fund the Federal Music Project (FMP). At its peak in 1939, the FMP employed more than 16,000 musicians and operated orchestras and chamber groups; choral and opera units; concert, military, and dance bands; and theater orchestras. It presented an estimated 5,000 performances before roughly 3 million people every week.

Fanfare for the Common Man

- There was a feeling among artists during the Depression—particularly those outside of academia—that the fine arts should have something to say to the common person. High art should offer solace, hope, joy, and revelation to a general population in short supply of those feelings. Copland was among those artists who held that conviction.
- The advent of WPA-sponsored ensembles, concerts, and broadcasts dramatically increased the size of the music-listening public in the United States, though it was incumbent on composers to write comprehensible, even likable music if they wanted to keep their audience.
- Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* is one of the most important and enduring works of his populist compositional period. The piece

was the brainchild of the music director and conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Eugene Goossens. In early 1942, Goossens asked 18 composers to write fanfares celebrating the war effort, all of which were premiered during the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's 1942-1943 season.

- By basing the fourth movement of his Symphony no. 3 on the *Fanfare for the Common Man*, Copland did three things: (1) He linked the symphony to the Great Depression-inspired populism of the 1930s; (2) he celebrated the victorious gallantry of the common citizen-soldiers of the United States; and (3) he connected the symphony to one of the most popular (and profitable) works he had ever composed.

Extinction

- Even as Copland's Third Symphony capped both an era of American history and his own experiments with musical populism, cultural and psychological changes were afoot that would render the work something of a dinosaur.
- The end of hostilities ushered in a period that was much more politically and morally complex than the war itself. Once victory had been achieved, it was necessary to deal with the inconceivable enormity of what had happened.
- Between 65 and 80 million souls had perished in the war, huge swatches of the planet had been destroyed, whole populations were uprooted, and the nuclear age had been initiated. In 1945, the United States was still the only country to possess the bomb, but the nuclear cat was out of the bag, and it could never be put back in.
- The Red Army did not stand down at the end of the war, and it quickly became apparent that Joseph Stalin had no intention of honoring agreements made with the United States, Britain, and France. Everyone knew that it was only a matter of time before the Soviets

got the bomb, which would increase the likelihood of a third world war—a final world war.

- For the generation of composers for whom the war and its aftermath was the formative experience of their lives, such music as Copland's Third Symphony—heroic, populist, and nationalist—was an abomination, representative of the spiritual and intellectual mindsets that had brought about the war in the first place.
 - Many composers rejected musical nationalism and populism entirely. These postwar composers believed that only a clean break with the past—music purged of self-expressive egocentricity and nationalistic hubris—was appropriate to the atomic age.
 - Most of the music these postwar modernists created is, in fact, unlistenable—music doomed by its own ugliness and expressive emptiness. But it is music that mirrors its time and place, a musical mirror of the postwar reality.
- Thankfully, we are no longer weighed down by the artistic politics of the 1940s to 1960s, and thus, we require no persuasion to enjoy Copland's symphony. It remains—by far—Copland's longest and grandest work. As Copland wrote in his original program note: "[The work is] intended to reflect the euphoric spirit of the country at the time." And that it does.

Górecki: Symphony No. 3 (1976)

On April 4, 1977, Henryk Górecki's Third Symphony received its premiere at the Royan Festival of Contemporary Art in France. Founded in 1964, Royan was the place to go for those who wanted to hear the cutting edge of musical modernism. Imagine, then, the audience's reaction when it heard a slowly unfolding, sublimely metaphysical, entirely tonal three-movement, 46-minute-long work for orchestra and soprano. A firestorm of controversy was unleashed, but all the Polish critics in the audience declared the symphony to be a masterwork. These critics understood that the piece was a mirror of the Polish experience of the mid-20th century, framed using poetry, historical allusions, and musical materials going all the way back to the 16th century.

Górecki's Third Symphony

- The second movement of Górecki's Symphony no. 3 sets to music an inscription scrawled on the wall of a cell in the "Palace": the Gestapo headquarters in Zakopane, in southern Poland. The graffiti is signed and dated by an 18-year-old girl who had been imprisoned there in 1944. The inscription reads:
No, mother, do not weep,
Most chaste Queen of Heaven.
Support me always.
Hail, Mary, full of grace.
- "Hail Mary, full of grace" is the beginning of the Ave Maria, the prayer to the Holy Mother. Górecki's setting is sublimely beautiful; it projects a sense of aching innocence and terrible tragedy and concludes with what can only be heard as a funeral knell.

- The Third Symphony is a work Górecki had to compose. It was written at an extraordinary time in Polish history: during the storm of riots and strikes in 1976 that led, four years later, to the founding of the Solidarity labor union. With revolution in the air, Górecki felt empowered to bear witness to the events that had shaped his life and his world.

First Movement

- Górecki subtitled the work *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*, but more than just songs, each of the three movements is a prayer, and each of the prayers concerns mothers and the deaths of their children.
- At about 30 minutes, the first movement is longer than the other two combined. It is cast in three parts, structured as an arch. Part one is a canon that starts low in the strings and builds to eight voices. Part two is the prayer, sung by the soprano. Part three begins with the canon at full strength—eight voices—then goes into reverse, whittling itself down to one voice by the movement's end. It is a stunning movement: meditative yet dynamic, mournful and defiant, and heartbreakingly beautiful.
- There is no mistaking the religious, plainchant-like quality of the canon theme. Górecki fashioned it by blending an old church hymn sung during Lent entitled “Behold, Jesus Is Dying” with an equally old folk song from central Poland called “Let Him Be Praised.”
- The prayer that makes up the central vocal section of the movement is called “The Lamentation of the Holy Cross.” It was created during the 15th century at the Monastery of Łysa Góra in eastern Poland. In the lament, Mary—standing at the base of the cross—begs the dying Jesus to share his pain with her. This is every mother's plea; there is no greater pain than to see your child suffer.
- Górecki's setting is simplicity personified: gently rising, gently imploring lines in the voice lead, at the conclusion of the prayer, to a heart-rending climax.

- In this first movement, Mary attempts to relieve the pain of her dying son. The reference is clear: The wounded Jesus represents the Polish nation and its suffering during the 20th century.
- At the same time, the historical elements in this first movement trace their origins to the age of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.
- That these ancient references are used to reflect on modern events adds tremendous power and pathos to the expressive impact of the symphony.

The World Turned Upside Down

- Russia and Germany—the two great continental powers of Europe—have never trusted each other, and for as long as there are nation-states, that is unlikely to change. Adding sociopolitical fuel to the rivalry is the fact that communism and fascism—the two most oppositional ideologies of the 20th century—came to be personified by Russia (in the guise of the Soviet Union) and Nazi Germany.
- It has become fashionable today to describe fascism and communism—or, more accurately, Nazism and Stalinism—as being essentially two sides of the same coin. From a practical point of view, this would seem to be self-evident.
- Both Nazism and Stalinism were rooted in a cult of personality based on the infallible actions of a single leader with total authority. Both systems employed a small ruling elite and a single ruling party to push forward their agendas. Both systems were atheistic, and both sought to do away with traditional notions regarding good and evil.
- Both systems sought to destroy the old world and create a new international order based on their own utopian visions. Both systems placed the state above the needs of individual people (except, of course, the needs of Hitler and Stalin).
- Both systems also required enemies, from within and without, to justify their actions. For Stalin, the great external enemy was international capitalism; the domestic enemies were saboteurs who stifled progress and ideological backsliders who no longer

supported the revolution. For Hitler, the great enemies were Bolshevism, democracy, and the Jews.

- Both systems required massive secret police organizations, concentration camps or gulags, and summary justice in order to control the population. Both Nazism and Stalinism were posited on unlimited expansion. Finally, both systems were intrinsically criminal—grim reflections of Hitler's and Stalin's psychotic personalities.
- Having said all this, Nazism and Stalinism were, nevertheless, ideological opposites. Stalin came to power as a result of a revolution of the political left; Hitler came to power as a result of a revolution of the political right. Stalinism advocated state ownership; Nazism, state control. In theory, Stalinism put forth a concept of global egalitarianism, while Nazism advocated ultranationalism.
- These ideological differences rendered Nazism and Stalinism as natural-born enemies. In August 1939, however, the two powers signed what amounted to a friendship pact and trade treaty. The world was aghast. Communists and communist sympathizers were horrified by what they perceived as Stalin's betrayal.
- But Stalin had his reasons. He knew that Germany was prepared to go to war, while the Soviet Union was not. When his attempts to negotiate a mutual defense pact with France and England went nowhere, Stalin decided to cut a deal with Hitler.
- What no one on the outside knew was that a secret additional protocol had been attached to the official treaty document. The protocol divided the sovereign states of Romania, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland between Germany and Russia. In return for its share of these territories, Russia promised to give Germany a free hand in Central and Western Europe.
- His eastern flank thus secure, Hitler was free to begin his war of expansion, which he did on September 1, 1939, by invading Poland. On September 17, the Red Army invaded Poland from the east and occupied the territory that the pact had assigned to the Soviet Union.

Horror and Tragedy

- What occurred in Poland in the five years between 1939 and 1944 was a demonstration of what happens when a modern industrial nation of 79 million people decides to invade, destroy, and absorb a neighboring country and murder or enslave its population of 35 million. The war killed more Poles by percentage of population than any other nation: Roughly 6 million Poles died in World War II, 16.7 percent of the population, or one out of every six people.
- The total destruction of the Polish capital of Warsaw was planned well before the war began. According to the Pabst Plan, a Nazi “model town”—populated by no more than 130,000 people—was to be built on its ruins. Although the town was never built, the Germans did build their killing centers—the extermination camps—on Polish soil: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Bełżec, and others.
- Until they were attacked and ousted from Poland in June 1941 by the Nazis, the Soviets behaved no better.
 - They took about 40,000 prisoners of war when they invaded eastern Poland, roughly 15,000 of whom were officers and 25,000 were soldiers and non-coms. The Soviets also rounded up doctors, lawyers, teachers, professors, writers, journalists, policemen, engineers, pilots, government officials, and priests.
 - The 25,000 soldiers and non-coms were put to work as slave laborers. As for the officers and civilians, numbering some 23,000, their fate was sealed on March 5, 1940, when Stalin and the Politburo ordered their execution. Because most of them were shot and buried in the Katyn Forest in western Russia, the action is known as the Katyn Massacre.
- Despite having been beaten militarily, the Polish government never surrendered. In 1940, a Polish government-in-exile was established in London, which coordinated the activities of the Polish underground. The underground created courts for trying collaborators and set up schools to replace those shut down by the Germans. Surviving



Between the Nazi special squads of police and the concentration camps, there was no World War II killing ground worse than Poland.

officers of the Polish Army established an underground army called the Home Army.

- On July 29, 1944, Soviet armored troops reached the eastern outskirts of Warsaw. Later that day, Moscow Radio broadcast—in Polish—an Appeal to Warsaw, calling on the citizens to rise up against the Germans. The commanders of the Polish Home Army, believing that their liberation was at hand, gave the command for the Warsaw Uprising to commence on August 1, 1944.
- Believing that they'd soon be fighting side by side with the Red Army, the Home Army attacked with somewhere between 25,000 and 50,000 combatants. Within a few days, it managed to liberate most of the city west of the Vistula River, while the Red Army did nothing.
- Stalin had no intention of allowing the Polish government in London to govern postwar Poland. The Home Army was filled with Polish nationalists who could cause the Soviets nothing but trouble.

- Thus, Stalin decided to kill two birds with one stone by letting the Poles and the Germans kill each other. Only then would he allow the Red Army to march in, and he would put in charge whomever he chose. And that's exactly what happened.
- The Poles fought heroically during the uprising, but in the end, it was a massacre. By the time it ended on October 2, Warsaw was a ghost town: 16,000 Home Army troops were dead; between 150,000 and 200,000 civilians had been executed; and the remainder of the population—some 700,000 people—were expelled from the city. The order was given to destroy whatever was left, and by the time the Germans finally withdrew in January 1945, 85 percent of Warsaw was destroyed.
- The Red Army entered the ruins on January 17, 1945. Right behind it was the so-called Lublin Committee, a Soviet puppet government primed and ready for installation. A Stalinist police state descended on Poland that would not have its first free election for 45 years, until October 27, 1991.

Third Movement

- Górecki was born in 1933 and grew up in southwest Poland, in the village of Czernica, just a few miles from the border with Czechoslovakia.
- In this, he was lucky. Czernica lies in a region called Silesia, which today straddles Poland, the Czech Republic, and Germany. The large German population of Silesia, along with its coal mines and heavy industry, made it one of the few places in Poland that was relatively safe during the war.
- Nevertheless, the Górecki family was neck deep in the resistance, and it cost them dearly. Górecki's grandfather died in Dachau, and his aunt, in Auschwitz. Górecki himself visited Auschwitz immediately after the war.

- The text of the third movement of Górecki's Symphony no. 3 comes from a folk song from Silesia. It reads, in part:

Where has he gone
My dearest son?
Perhaps during the uprising
The cruel enemy killed him.

Ah, you evil people
In the name of God, the most Holy,
Tell me, why did you kill
My son?

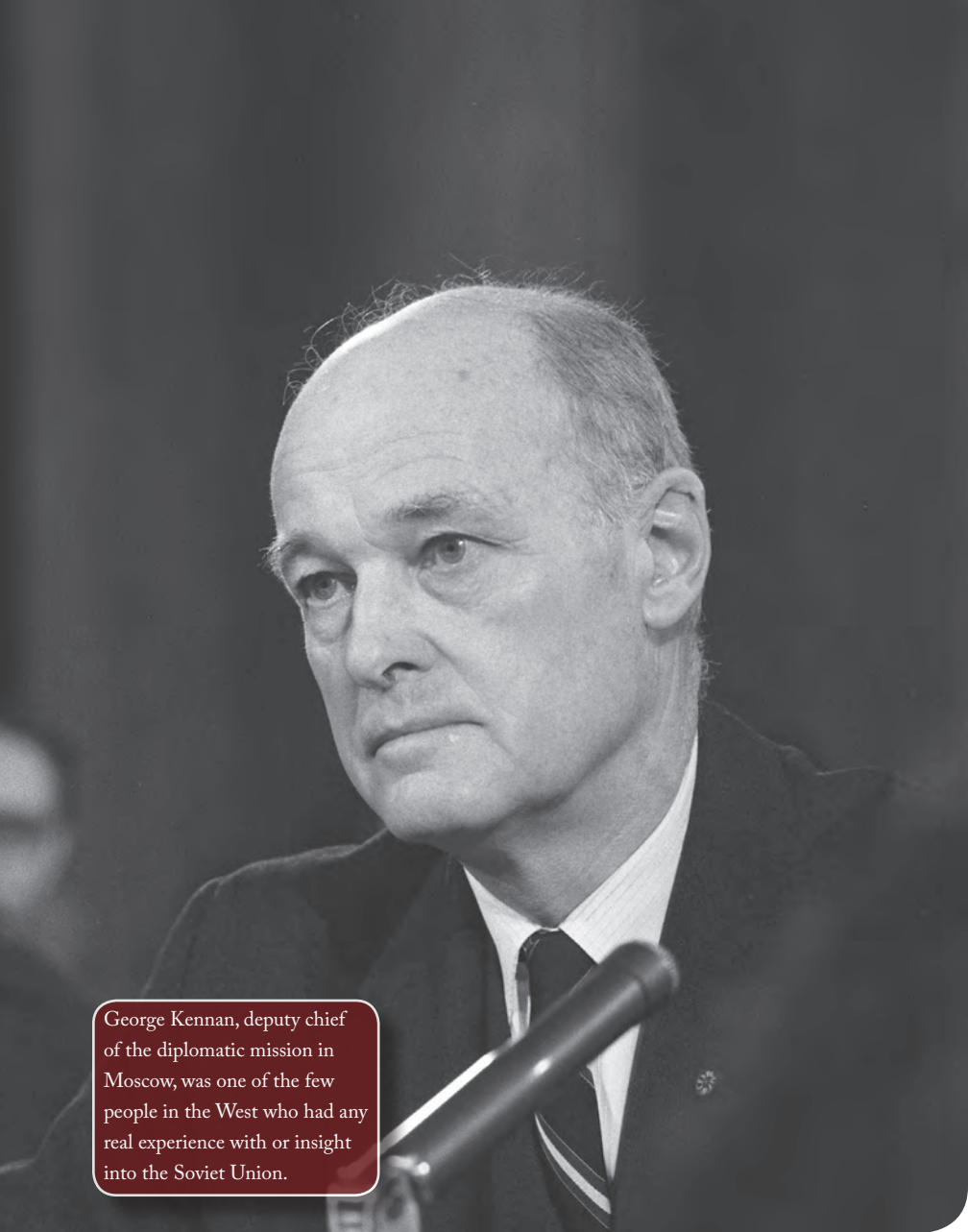
- Contrary to what is often written, Henryk Górecki's Third Symphony is not "about" the Nazi and Russian invasion of Poland, the Katyn Forest Massacre or the Warsaw Uprising, Auschwitz and the Holocaust, or Górecki's own epic struggles with the Polish Communist Party. Rather, Górecki's Third is "about" the Polish experience of the mid-20th century, taken as widely as we please.

Crumb: *Black Angels* (1970)

George Crumb's *Black Angels* for amplified string quartet is inscribed on its title page as having been written: "*in tempore belli*, 1970": "in time of war, 1970." It is cast in 13 movements that Crumb calls images. The first, middle, and last images are threnodies. A *threnody* is an expression of grief and suffering. The big history behind this lecture is how one-time allies became enemies; how the Cold War between them became hot in the country of Vietnam; and how an American composer from West Virginia managed to capture the heartbreak and futility of that war in a piece for amplified string quartet.

Containment

- By 1946, many people believed that World War III was right around the corner. For a world still digging itself out from World War II, such a prospect was unthinkable. A workable policy for dealing with the Soviet Union had to emerge quickly. The problem was that few Westerners had real insight into the nature and motivations of the Soviet regime. One who did was a Foreign Service officer named George Frost Kennan.
- Kennan had been appointed deputy chief of the diplomatic mission in Moscow in the spring of 1944. In 1946, the U.S. Treasury Department—still thinking that the Soviet Union was an ally—asked the State Department to explain why the Soviets had refused to endorse the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.
- On February 22, 1946, Kennan sent a 5,500-word telegram (the "Long Telegram") to Secretary of State James Byrnes, in which he asserted that the Soviet Union was not an ally but an inherently expansionist adversary.



George Kennan, deputy chief of the diplomatic mission in Moscow, was one of the few people in the West who had any real experience with or insight into the Soviet Union.

- The telegram was a wake-up call, a trenchant analysis of Soviet thinking. Kennan advised a policy of containment: that Soviet adventurism be met with a firm hand.
- Kennan's telegram became the basis of the Truman Doctrine, which, according to the Department of State: "established that the United States would provide political, military and economic assistance to all democratic nations under threat from external or internal authoritarian forces."
- Following the doctrine of containment, a United Nations force led by the United States went to war in Korea when communist North Korean forces—supported by the Soviet Union and China—invaded the South on June 25, 1950.
 - In October 1950, China entered the war, and Douglas MacArthur, the allied commander, called for military action against China. But neither Truman nor the Joint Chiefs supported MacArthur's call for escalation; they understood that an open-ended land war on mainland Asia was doomed to failure.
 - The Korean War was a limited war: Its strategic goal was not to defeat and occupy North Korea but, rather, to contain North Korea and maintain the division of the country between North and South. The Korean ceasefire was signed on July 27, 1953. If containment meant victory, then victory was achieved in Korea.

Vietnam

- Given the successful containment of communism in Korea, the civilian authorities of the U.S. government assumed that it could be achieved 10 years later in Vietnam. But Vietnam wasn't Korea.
- The first Vietnam War was a war of national liberation; it began in 1946 when the French attempted to reclaim their former colony after the defeat of Japan. This war ended in 1954 with the French expulsion from Vietnam and the division of the country into North and South.

- The national coalition that fought the Japanese and the French was called the Viet Minh. From 1941, the Viet Minh and, later, the Viet Cong and North Vietnam were led by a charismatic nationalist named Ho Chi Minh. For Ho Chi Minh, the division of Vietnam was an abomination perpetrated by colonialists. Ho's vision was the creation of a unified, communist Vietnam.
- With the French out of the picture, the United States became the political guarantor of South Vietnam, throwing its support behind a right-wing would-be dictator named Ngo Dinh Diem, based on his staunch anti-communism. Diem came to power in 1955, launching one of the most corrupt governments the United States ever propped up.
- Diem's reversal of land reforms instituted by the Viet Minh didn't go over well, and by 1957, a homegrown insurgency had begun. The insurgency—which grew out of the Viet Minh—was derisively referred to by the South Vietnamese government as the Viet Cong; the “Red Vietnamese.”
- In September 1960, North Vietnam officially recognized the insurgency in the South and called for the removal of American imperialists from the South. That official recognition meant providing the Viet Cong with weapons, supplies, military advisors, and a supply line that went not only through Vietnam but through the presumably demilitarized countries of Laos and Cambodia.
- The rationale for defending Vietnam was advocated by President Eisenhower at a news conference in 1954, when he likened the countries of Southeast Asia to a row of dominos, claiming that if one should fall to communism, the others would fall, as well. Almost everyone in a position of power at the time seems to have bought into this domino theory.
- The Viet Cong gathered strength and support through 1961, the year Kennedy was inaugurated. Kennedy was sorely tested by three crises in the first year of his presidency: the failed CIA-sponsored invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961; the less-than-inspiring summit

with Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna in June 1961; and the construction of the Berlin Wall, starting on August 13, 1961.

- Kennedy knew that on the whole, the South Vietnamese army was incompetent, and he knew that the South Vietnamese government would collapse without American support. Thus, he sent advisors and billions of dollars to prop up the government.
- With this sort of investment, it was necessary to clean up the South Vietnamese government. With CIA support, Ngo Dinh Diem was assassinated, and a coup d'état was staged on November 2, 1963. Diem's assassination was a propaganda windfall for the North, which could now claim that the United States had, in essence, recolonized the South.

The shrieking, nattering, buzzing, wasp-like music that begins and concludes George Crumb's *Black Angels* was likely inspired by attack helicopters.



- On November 22, 1963, President Kennedy was assassinated, and Lyndon Baines Johnson was sworn in as the 36th president of the United States.

Escalation

- The moment of truth for America's involvement in Vietnam occurred eight months into Johnson's presidency, during the summer of 1964. On August 2, 1964, the United States claimed that North Vietnamese gunboats had fired on American warships in the Gulf of Tonkin. The incident led to open warfare between North Vietnam and the United States.
- On March 2, 1965, the United States began bombing North Vietnam. Six days later, 3,500 Marines were sent to South Vietnam, marking the official beginning of the U.S. ground war. For the duration of the war, the United States would simultaneously fight two adversaries: the conventional army of North Vietnam and the guerilla army of the Viet Cong.
- From the beginning, the United States fought a limited war. But a limited war would not work in Vietnam because North Vietnam and the Viet Cong were fighting a total war, in which they were willing to make sacrifices far beyond anything the American public would tolerate.
- Militarily, the U.S. armed forces did what they were asked to do. Fighting in triple-canopy jungle, malarial rivers, and mountain highlands, these forces never lost a major battle. At the cost of 58,000 battle deaths, the U.S. military exacted a price of 1.4 million battle deaths, a ratio of nearly 25 to 1.
- But in the end, the body counts made no difference. The North Vietnamese and Viet Cong did not have to defeat the United States; they just had to *not* quit—to prolong the war to the point where its costs were no longer commensurate with the perceived benefits of victory.

“Dance of Tears”

- The sense of waste and grief that permeated the American national spirit as it watched the first televised war is captured in the sixth movement of *Black Angels*, entitled “*Pavana Lachrymae*,” or “Dance of Tears.”
- The “*Pavana Lachrymae*” is a pastiche. *Pastiche* is a technique used by many composers in the 1960s and 1970s that incorporated direct quotes from existing pieces of music into otherwise newly composed works. Pastiche treats these musical quotations as “found objects” that, when juxtaposed with other music, create unexpected associations.
- The most striking quotation in *Black Angels* occurs in “*Pavana Lachrymae*,” which consists almost entirely of a quote from a song and a string quartet by Franz Schubert, *Death and the Maiden*.
 - Death has come to claim an adolescent girl, and she is not prepared to go quietly. But at the conclusion, the song switches from minor to major; the girl’s fear of death and darkness is transformed into acceptance.
 - In 1822, the 25-year-old Schubert was diagnosed with syphilis. It was a death sentence, and his life and his music changed overnight. In 1825, in the depths of depression, he composed his String Quartet no. 14 in D Minor. The second movement consists of a theme and five variations. The theme is the fearful, minor-mode introduction to *Death and the Maiden*.
- This music—which represents both death and transfiguration—is the music George Crumb quotes in his “Dance of Tears,” scored for the cello, second violin, and viola. Crumb indicates that the trio of instruments should sound: “grave, solemn; like a consort of viols (a fragile echo of an ancient music).”
- To achieve this effect, Crumb asks the players to bow near the pegs of their instruments and to hold their bows in the manner of viol

bows. Meanwhile, the first violin provides electric insect sounds in counterpoint with the faux viol consort.

The Tet Offensive and Its Aftermath

- The turning point in the Vietnam War was the Tet Offensive, which began on January 30, 1968. Tet gave the lie to administration claims that the United States was winning the war. The fact that the offensive was destroyed with colossal losses to the communists was immaterial; this “tactical” victory for the United States was a strategic victory for North Vietnam because, after Tet, the American public had had enough.
- The catastrophic series of events that followed only served to darken the American mood and make an ever-growing number of people prone to violent protest. On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated; within a week, riots broke out in more than 100 U.S. cities. On June 5, 1968, presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy was shot. On August 20, 1968, the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia.
- In November 1968, Richard Nixon was elected president, based in part on his promise to end the war with honor. But it took Nixon another four years to extricate the United States from Vietnam. Nixon also allowed his national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, to initiate a secret, illegal bombing campaign in Cambodia and Laos. The bombing campaign became known on April 30, 1970, when Nixon announced the invasion of Cambodia. The protests came immediately.
- It was during this difficult time that George Crumb composed his antiwar string quartet *Black Angels*. We conclude by sampling the 10th image of *Black Angels*, entitled “God-Music.” The voice of God is that of the ‘cello, played high in its range. The other three players bow the edges of tuned crystal glasses, creating a shimmering, unworldly accompaniment.

Summing Up Our Course

- We human beings are contradictory creatures, capable of both great and terrible things. At the dark end of the spectrum is the lust for power—power over our fellow human beings and power to redraw maps. At the other end is our ability to create and procreate—to make and raise children; to build, to love, and to make sense of the chaos around us by telling stories; and to make art by creating symbols that universalize human experience.
- Music—the most abstract of all the arts—is at once the most universal of all the arts, unbound by concrete form or defined by any particular spoken language. Consequently, music has a unique power to both personify and transcend the time and place of its creation.
- Music informs, delights, and intensifies experience and meaning. As a mirror of events, it can shed light and deliver understanding beyond that of almost any other medium.

Timeline

1601. Thomas Morley, "Hard by a Crystal Fountain"
- 1717 George Frideric Handel, *Water Music*
- 1782 Wolfgang Mozart, *The Abduction from the Harem*
- 1796 Franz Joseph Haydn, *Mass in the Time of War*
1810. Ludwig van Beethoven, Piano Sonata no. 26 in E-flat Major, op. 81a, *Farewell*
1813. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Wellington's Victory*
- 1830 Hector Berlioz and Rouget de L'Isle, "La Marseillaise"
1831. Frédéric Chopin, Étude in C Minor, op. 10, no. 12, *Revolutionary*
- 1840 Mikhail Glinka, *A Life for the Tsar*
- 1842 Giuseppe Verdi, *Nabucco*
- 1848 Johann Strauss Sr., *Radetzky March*
1861. Johannes Brahms, Piano Quartet in G Minor, op. 25
- 1862 Louis Moreau Gottschalk, *Paraphrase de Concert 'Union,'*
op. 48
- 1869-1874 . . . Richard Wagner, *The Ring*
- 1893 Antonin Dvořák, Symphony no. 9, *New World*
- 1898 Mily Balakirev, Symphony no. 1 in C Major
- 1905 Leoš Janáček, Piano Sonata *From the Street 1.X.1905*
- 1907 Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, *The Golden Cockerel*
1919. Gustav Holst, *Ode to Death*
- 1922 Alban Berg, *Wozzeck*
- 1946 Aaron Copland, Symphony no. 3
- 1962 Dmitri Shostakovich, Symphony no. 13, "Babi Yar"
- 1970 George Crumb, *Black Angels*
- 1976 Henryk Górecki, Symphony no. 3

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